

THAT'S RACIN', 11C

Former Nationwide Series crew chief Jason Ratcliff finds success on the Sprint Cup circuit with Joey Logano.



Bill Shanks

Paying them to play elsewhere

We all know there is a lot of money in baseball. Players are paid enormous amounts of money, and even mediocre players are usually set for life.

Perhaps the worst thing that can happen to a club is to pay a player who is no longer on the roster.

The Atlanta Braves might be the leader in the clubhouse for that category, and it goes back a few decades.

In November of 1979, then-Braves owner Ted Turner did something outrageous. He gave reliever Al Hrabosky a five-year contract. "The Mad Hungarian," as Hrabosky was called, had been a pretty decent reliever for St. Louis and Kansas City. He was no Bruce Sutter, but Hrabosky was pretty good.

That didn't work out too well. Hrabosky, known for going behind the mound before he pitched and slamming the ball in his glove in a rage, pitched in exactly 100 games for the Braves. Hrabosky had just seven saves, and he had an ERA of 3.51. The Braves released him in the middle of the 1982 season.

But Hrabosky's contract called for payments to be spread out across 35 years. Turner reportedly promised Hrabosky that he would teach him all about television, but Hrabosky never appeared on a Braves telecast. He instead went back to St. Louis and is still on the Cardinals' broadcast team to this day.

Then, a few years later, Turner did it again. He desperately wanted to sign a free agent. The Braves had been spurned by Dave Winfield, Don Sutton, Reggie Jackson and Rich Gossage through the years. So in December of 1984 Turner signed Sutter, who at that time was the best reliever in the game.

That was a six-year contract, worth a reported \$4.8 million — \$800,000 per year. After having a 2.72 ERA in four years for St. Louis, Sutter had a 4.55 ERA for the Braves in 112 games. His shoulder was ruined by the time he got to Atlanta.

But his contract reportedly called for deferred payments that would pay Sutter \$1.3 million a year for 30 years after the six-year deal was over.

I could not verify if the Braves are still paying Hrabosky and/or Sutter. That's probably not something they would want to admit. My sources believe that money is somehow "off the books," but there is no confirmation. If the reports were correct, Hrabosky would be paid through 2014 and Sutter through 2021.

Why couldn't Hrabosky or Sutter have earned some of that money by helping out

SEE SHANKS, 3C

Furyk, McDowell lead

By JOE JULIANO
The Philadelphia Inquirer

SAN FRANCISCO — It was difficult to tell Saturday what was more help in bringing the best out of Jim Furyk in the third round of the U.S. Open at the diabolical Lake Course of the Olympic Club.

It could have been the presence of Tiger Woods, who was considered to have the best chance to win of the three men tied for the lead at the start of the round. Or maybe it was the significance of the national championship, and the chance to win his second, nine years after capturing his first.

Whatever the case, Furyk hit a good share of fairways and greens, saved par four times after hitting his approach shot in bunkers, and finished 54 holes in a tie for the lead with Graeme McDowell, meaning two former Open champions will go off in the final pairing Sunday.

Furyk, 42, checked in with an even-par 70, beating Woods by a whopping five strokes. He concluded three rounds at 1-under 209 where he tied with McDowell, who fired a 68.

Woods' 75 shocked a golf-crazed public

SEE OPEN, 3C



CHARLIE RIEDEL/Associated Press
Tiger Woods, left, caddie Mike "Fluff" Cowan and Jim Furyk wait on the ninth tee during Saturday's third round of the U.S. Open at The Olympic Club in San Francisco.

The game is here



The Telegraph looks at the all-time best athletes in the midstate by jersey number in a summer-long series.

A look at Middle Georgia's all-time greats



This week: The 90s. Page 8C.

Battle forms at Brickyard

By JOHN KOSATER
sports@macon.com

Cole Tidwell Jr. quickly admits that he didn't hit the golf ball great in the first round of the Macon-Middle Georgia Golf Championship.

He did manage to hit it well enough to be in a four-way battle for the lead with a round of 69, leaving him tied for third with Lee Gerdes, two shots behind first-round leader Taylor Jernigan and one shot behind defending



BEAU CABELL/bcabel@macon.com
Cole Tidwell Jr. tees off on the first hole at the Brickyard at Riverside on Saturday during the first round of the Macon-Middle Georgia Championship.

SEE GOLF, 3C

Hammel's one-hitter gives Orioles victory

By GEORGE HENRY
Associated Press

Orioles 5,
Braves 0

ATLANTA — Jason Hammel pitched a one-hitter for his first career shutout, allowing only Jason Heyward's two-out single in the seventh inning, and the Baltimore Orioles beat the Atlanta Braves 5-0 on Saturday night.

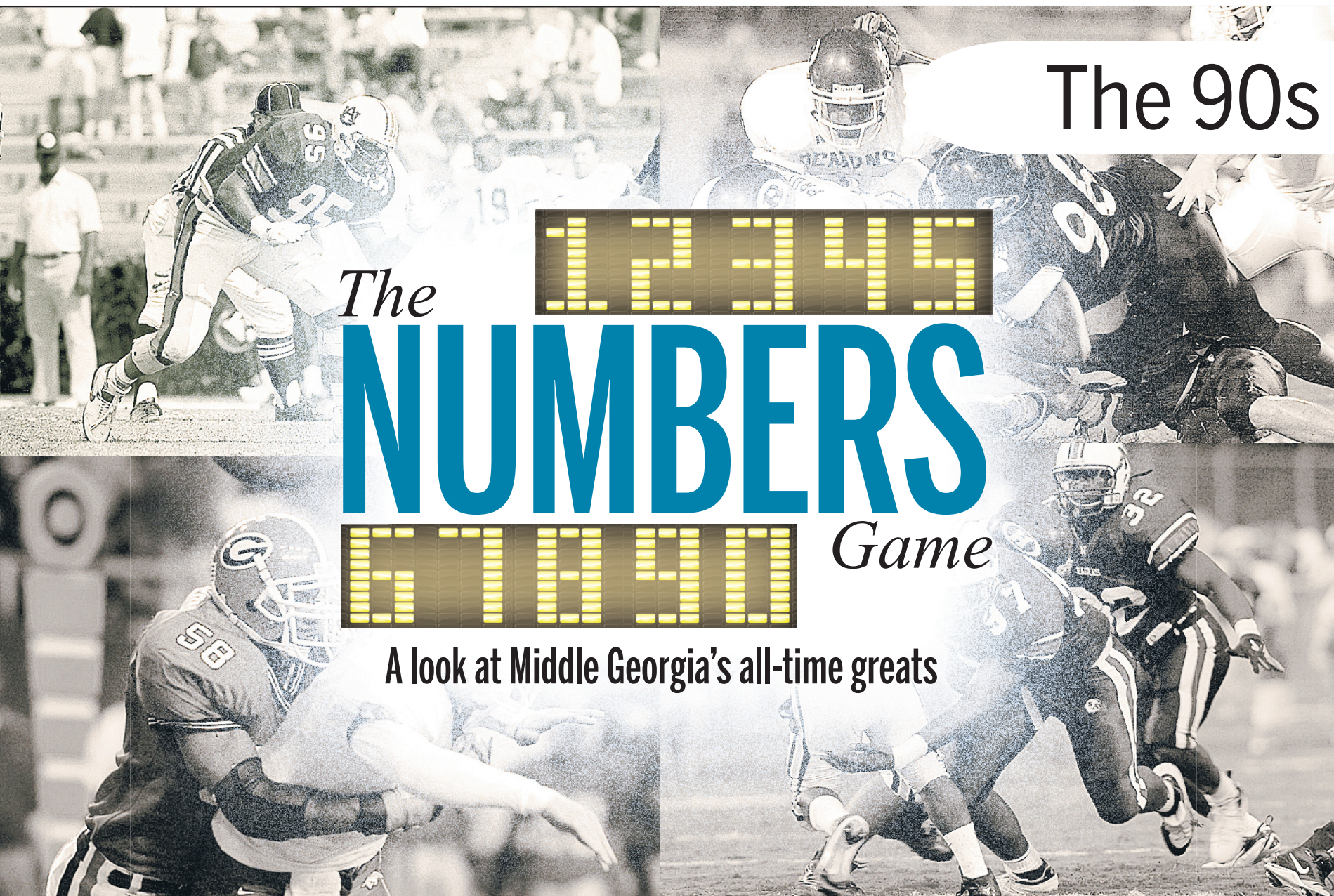
There have already been five no-hitters in the majors this season, including three this month, and Hammel made a strong bid to add to the list.

Hammel struck out eight and walked two, throwing 65 of 102 pitches for strikes.

Brandon Beachy (5-5) left the game with right elbow soreness in the fourth inning. The major leagues' ERA leader allowed no hits and one run.

Next: vs. Orioles, 1:35 p.m., Sunday (Fox Sports South)





The 90s

The NUMBERS Game

A look at Middle Georgia's all-time greats

40

Devarick Scandrett, Mary Persons, football

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Go to macon.com for more photos of the players that were chosen, as well as details as to how they were chosen.

campus with the Houston Texans and the Green Bay Packers.

Why we picked him:

Scandrett led Mary Persons to back-to-back playoff appearances during his junior and senior seasons.

91

Ron Simmons, Warner Robins, football

Bio: Simmons earned all-state honors and the AP Defensive player of the Year award as a senior in 1976. He led a defense that allowed 6.6 points per game and posted eight shutouts, including a 34-0 win over Griffin in the championship game. Simmons went on to an All-America career at Florida State, where he finished in the top 10 in Heisman voting in 1979. Florida State retired his jersey, and he was inducted into the Florida State Hall of Fame and the Orange Bowl Hall of Fame. He later earned induction into the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame and the College Football Hall of Fame. Simmons went on to a successful pro wrestling career, and he became the heavyweight champion in 1992.

Why we picked him:

Alongside Takeo Spikes, Simmons might be the most dominant defensive player in Middle Georgia history. Simmons led Warner Robins to its first state championship and, in turn, earning a mythical national title. Simmons probably would be the pick no matter what number he wore.

What they said about him:

"We tried everything — double-teaming, running away from him, axing, holding, you name it. Nothing worked. (Simmons), he just plain ate our lunch. He may be the best noseguard I've ever seen." — Arizona State head coach Frank Kush said to the media after a loss to Florida State in 1979 (Sports Illustrated, Sept. 1, 1980)

97

Anthony Abrams, Warner Robins, football

Bio: Abrams was the stalwart on the Demons' defense that won the 1988 state championship. He was The Telegraph's All-Middle Georgia Player of the Year, as well as the AP's Defensive Player of the Year, in 1988. Abrams signed with Auburn and lettered a year before transferring to Clark Atlanta. He eventually was drafted by the Buffalo Bills and spent time with the Washington Redskins.

Why we picked him: The Abrams-led defense held opponents to 5.6 points per game, and Abrams had 141 tackles, 10 tackles for loss, eight pass breakups and seven sacks.

94

Justin Kitchens, Houston County, football

Bio: A late bloomer in high school, Kitchens emerged as a senior to earn all-region recognition after making 55 tackles and five sacks. He actually wore No. 93 for two years at Houston County, but he later switched and wore

No. 90 as a senior. He earned a scholarship offer later than most players, and he pulled the trigger to commit to Purdue in January 2009. Kitchens played in eight games as a freshman defender before moving to offensive tackle as a sophomore.

Why we picked him:

Through nominations and recommendations from coaches and hours spent researching microfilm and archives, The Telegraph couldn't find a truly great No. 93. Kitchens, who was certainly deserving of consideration at No. 90, gave us our out.

94

Josh Chester, Northside, football

Bio: A classic overachiever, Chester overcame the rap of being too short to become one of the most productive defensive linemen in Middle Georgia during the past two years. Chester finished his career with 120 tackles, 21 tackles for loss and 11 sacks. He signed with Middle Tennessee in February.

Why we picked him: Chester was one of the more reliable players around during the past few years. But he blossomed into an all-state player as a senior, and he earned All-Middle Georgia honors and was named to The Telegraph's 12 to Treasure team.

99

Adrian Hollingshed, Peach County, football

Bio: After missing much of his junior year to injury, Hollingshed jumped onto the radar of college coaches with an All-Middle Georgia-caliber senior season. He went from unknown to having to decide between Georgia and Auburn. He picked the Bulldogs and became a valuable player during his time in Athens.

Why we picked him:

Hollingshed's hard work during his junior and senior years helped turn him into one of the best linebackers in Middle Georgia during the 1990s.

96

Kyle Moore, Houston County, football

Bio: Moore is one of the most ballyhooed players from Middle Georgia during the past decade. He had 93 tackles, 22 sacks and eight forced fumbles as a senior, and he collected 15 sacks as a junior. He earned all-state, All-Middle Georgia, Parade All-American and USA Today All-USA first-team honors. He started for two seasons at Southern California before getting drafted by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. He now plays for the Buffalo Bills.

Why we picked him: Moore's on-field production at Houston County met the incredible hype he received. He is one of the few, if not only, area players to earn a scholarship offer from Southern California.

Others to consider

Chris Johnson, Northside, football: Johnson never played his final two years while he battled and ultimately died from leukemia. However, every Northside player and coach would tell you Johnson played a huge role in the Eagles' back-to-back undefeated seasons, and his inspiration was evident in the No. 96 embroidered on their jerseys and on the placards carried by fans during the 2007 championship game victory over Ware County.

97

Abry Jones, Northside, football

Bio: Jones led a defense that helped Northside win back-to-back state championships and 35 consecutive games. He finished with 28 career sacks and earned a spot in the Under Armour All-American game. He was named all-state twice and earned AP Class AAAA Defensive Player of the Year honors as a senior. Jones

was named to The Telegraph's All-Decade team. He is currently a senior at Georgia, where he started all 14 games as a junior.

Why we picked him:

Jones was the stalwart on one of the best defenses in Middle Georgia history. He was downright dominant during his junior season, particularly against Tucker in the Georgia Dome during Northside's memorable comeback. He also stood out on national television as a senior against Lowndes.

What they said about him:

"If I'm the opposing coach, I'm making sure I mention to the P.A. announcer to get his name right," Warner Robins head coach Bryan Way said when told that Jones gets mad when his name is pronounced Arby instead of Abry. "The last thing I want is to see him angry on the field."

90

Greg Clark, Northside, football

Bio: The massive defensive lineman towered over most offensive linemen during his career. He finished his senior season with 55 tackles and nine tackles for loss. Clark was one of the top defenders on a defense that helped lead Northside to the state championship game, where the Eagles lost to Camden County. Clark is currently a sophomore defensive tackle at Tennessee.

Why we picked him:

Clark was a steady presence on some great Northside squads. The Eagles won the 2007 state championship, with Clark getting some important playing time. He learned from his time playing with Abry Jones, and later he was a more important cog on the 2009 state runner-up team.

99

Will Thompson, Northside, football

Bio: Thompson helped lead a Northside defense that didn't allow more than 14 points in a game until the Eagles lost to Lowndes in the Georgia Dome. Thompson's defense had six shutouts and went 25-2 in his final two seasons with the Eagles. Thompson went to Georgia and finished with 14.5 career sacks in 36 career starts. Standing down the defensive line from All-American David Pollock, Thompson made his share of plays for the Bulldogs. He overcame injuries that forced him to miss the 2003 season.

Why we picked him:

Thompson was one of the big names during Northside's ascension into state power. Alongside Dantonio Burnette and Anthony Sessions, Thompson helped turn the Northside defense into one of the most powerful ones in the state.



Northside's Abry Jones, right, helped the Eagles win 35 straight games before becoming a starter at Georgia.

The NUMBERS Game

A look at Middle Georgia's all-time greats

Athletes without numbers

Not all of Middle Georgia's greatest athletes had numbers. Here are just a few of the greats who didn't have jersey numbers:

Arnold Blum, Lanier, golf: Blum won five Georgia Amateur Championships, three SEC championships and played on two Walker Cup teams.

Nate Carr, Jones County, wrestling: Carr won three state titles at Jones County, won a national junior college championship and competed at Iowa State.

Brenda Cliette, Northeast, track: Cliette won four NCAA championships at Florida State and also won gold medals at the Goodwill Games, World University Games and the Pan-American Games. She was a four-time All-American and was an alternate in the 1984 Olympics.

Watts Gunn, Lanier, golf: Gunn played against Georgia Tech teammate Bobby Jones in a legendary match at the 1925 U.S. Amateur and later played in two Walker Cups.

Russell Henley, Stratford, golf: Henley won two Georgia Amateur Championships, the Haskins Award as the nation's top collegiate golfer and a professional event on the Nationwide Tour as an amateur. He played in two U.S. Opens and one Walker Cup.

Kelley Hester, Stratford, golf: Hester was a four-year letterwinner for Georgia from 1993-96 and earned All-SEC recognition in 1993, 1994 and 1995 as the former Kelley Richardson and later became Georgia's head coach.

Sarah Howard, Trinity Christian, track and field: Howard has continuously broken her own state records in the shot put, and she leaves Trinity Christian as the best thrower in Georgia, GISA or GHSA. She's headed to North Carolina and, if she stays healthy and progresses, could be in the mix for the 2016 or 2020 Olympics.

Martha Hudson, Twin City, track: Hudson starred at Tennessee State before winning a gold medal in the 4x100 relay at the 1960 Olympics.

Jaime Kaplan, Stratford, tennis: Kaplan won three individual state titles and went 156-0 in high school. She played in 14 Grand Slam tennis events.

Roger Kingdom, Vienna, track: As a standout football player, Kingdom won gold medals in the 110 hurdles at the 1984 and 1988 Olympics.

Trelle Kite, Central, golf: Kite starred at Central and then at Georgia State. She later became the golf coach at Augusta State, Tulsa and then Texas A&M.

Angel Martino, Americus, swimming: Martino won three gold medals and three bronze medals during her Olympics career.

Pookie Middlebrooks, Mount de Sales, track: Middlebrooks sped to the 1983 GISA 100 meters championship, breaking the state record that still stands 30 years later.

Chip Minton, Southwest, bobsledding: Minton competed in two Winter Olympics, finishing fifth in 1998. He was part of the bronze-medal winning team at the 1997 World Championships.

Laura Nelson, Mount de Sales, tennis: Nelson was the top-ranked tennis player in the South in 1983 while at Mount de Sales before heading to Mississippi.

Peter Persons, Stratford, golf: Persons was the SEC Golfer of the Year in 1986 and later won the PGA Tour's Chattanooga Classic in 1990.

Antonio Pettigrew, Southwest, track: Pettigrew won five U.S. 400-meter championships and took home the gold medal in the 400 at the 1991 World Championships.

Young Stribling, Lanier, boxing: A great high school basketball player, Stribling went 256-16-14 as a professional boxer before he died in a motorcycle crash as a 28-year-old.

Duck Swann, Lanier, golf: Swann was a standout at Lanier before heading to Georgia Tech, and he later became a standout senior amateur, becoming the first American to win the British Senior Open.

Grace Tinkey, FPD, cross country: The greatest cross country runner in Middle Georgia history already, Tinkey hasn't lost a high school race on her way to four straight state titles. She is the Gatorade Cross Country Runner of the Year for Georgia, and she still has another year to go.

Sonny Wilcher, Lanier, track: Wilcher went undefeated in the 440-yard dash his first two years at South Carolina. He previously led Lanier to a state championship and won state titles in the 440-yard dash twice in high school.



GRANT BLANKENSHIP/gblankenship@macon.com

Stratford and Georgia product Russell Henley has played in two U.S. Opens and won a Nationwide Tour event as an amateur player.



WOODY MARSHALL/wmarshall@macon.com

FPD's Grace Tinkey has won four straight high school cross country titles and also has won the Macon Labor Day Road Race 5K.

Pick it then Click it



Bill Shanks

Jurrjens' solid start helps Braves

Not many people thought Jair Jurrjens was going to do what he did Friday night in Boston. Even if you thought he was going to do well, there was no way you thought he was going to do that well.

The Atlanta right-hander pitched 7-2/3 innings and gave up only one run on three hits. It was quite a return for Jurrjens, as some wondered if he would ever pitch again in an Atlanta uniform.

He was the one who made people believe that. Jurrjens was awful to start this season, with ordinary stuff and horrible stats, and then he didn't do a very good job in Triple-A Gwinnett. If not for an injury to Brandon Beachy, there is no way Jurrjens would have gotten another chance.

But Jurrjens is being paid \$5.5 million this season, and it's hard to keep someone like that in the minor leagues. Teams want to give players every possible chance to see if they can contribute.

Now that Jurrjens has done just that, we have to see what will come next. Will Jurrjens show he is, in fact, back to the standard he set in the first half of 2011, when he was so good many believed he should have started the All-Star game?

Or will he go back to being the pitcher who looked so lost in April that a trip to the minor leagues was the only answer?

He still has a lot to prove, but the performance by Jurrjens was a big lift for this team. The Braves seemed psychologically down after Beachy's injury. Beachy had been one of the best pitchers in the NL this season, and there's no doubt losing him was a big blow.

It was good that the Braves had options, but teams still never want to lose a pitcher who had pitched that well. It was about as bad as last season, when the Braves lost Jurrjens and Tommy Hanson to injuries in the second half of the season.

Jurrjens' performance might scale back the urgency to find another starting pitcher. Rumors circulated all week the Braves had scouted Chicago right-hander Matt Garza, and they were no doubt looking at others who might be available before the trade deadline in five weeks.

They'll still continue to look, but Jurrjens can make that unnecessary if he continues his solid work. The big question general manager Frank Wren must ask is whether a trio of Tim Hudson, Hanson and Jurrjens would be a good enough trio in a postseason series. If Jurrjens doesn't cut it and he has to be replaced by Randall Delgado or Mike Minor as the third starter in the rotation, the answer to that question might be a bit more difficult to answer.

SEE SHANKS, 10C

THE GAME CONTINUES...

The 80s. Pages 8-9C.



WOODY MARSHALL/wmarshall@macon.com

Washington County's Allisha Gray (15) will play for the United States this summer in the FIBA Americans U-18 qualifying tournament in Puerto Rico.

Honors just keep coming

Gray's accomplishments continue to pile up

By JONATHAN HEETER
jheeter@macon.com

SANDERSVILLE — Although she still has about a year before walking across a stage to pick up a high school diploma, Allisha Gray already has accomplished enough to fill several high school careers.

Gray, a Washington County junior, collects trophies and accolades like few girls basketball players in Georgia history.

Gray's biggest honor, how-

ever, will come in July when she will play for the United States in the FIBA Americans U-18 qualifying tournament in Puerto Rico.

"It's the biggest honor for me so far, getting to put on that uniform," said Gray, The Telegraph's Selby Buck Award winner as Middle Georgia's top overall athlete. "It's nice to get invited to the tryouts, and it will be a big privilege to represent my country."

Gray received an invitation to tryouts for the sec-

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Go to macon.com/prepblog for Jonathan Heeter's high school sports blog and also follow him at twitter.com/heets_tweets.

was looking for this time around.

ond straight year. She missed out on making the team in 2011 during the tryouts in Colorado Springs, Colo., but she said she had a better idea of what the committee

"I was prepared this time around and knew what to expect," she said. "It meant a lot to make the team."

Gray spends her summers travelling throughout the country with her AAU team, playing in tournaments and showcases.

Hard work and dedication helped her earn a scholarship to North Carolina, one of the top women's basketball programs in the nation. She will play alongside Diamond DeShields in Chapel Hill, N.C.



"She's one of the reasons I choose UNC," Gray said. "We've played together on a AAU team. I think it's a pretty nice one-two punch. But I also love the campus, and they have my major (physical therapy)."

SEE GRAY, 10C

Red Sox drop Delgado, Braves

Associated Press

BOSTON — Will Middlebrooks had a solo homer among his three hits and drove in two runs, Franklin Morales gave Boston another decent start as the fill-in for Josh Beckett and the Red Sox beat the Atlanta Braves 8-4 on Saturday night.

Dustin Pedroia added three hits, a walk and had two RBI for Boston, which won for the eighth time in 10 games to ensure a winning inter-league record for the eighth straight season. The Red Sox improved to 10-7 against NL opponents.

Morales (1-1) gave up three runs — two earned — on

seven hits, striking out eight and walking one. He struck out a career-best nine in five innings June 17 against the Chicago Cubs, when he took Beckett's turn in the rotation after the right-hander was placed on the 15-day disabled list with shoulder inflammation.

Braves starter Randall Delgado (4-8) was knocked out after retiring only four batters, giving up four runs on six hits.

Michael Bourn had three singles, two stolen bases and two RBIs for the Braves, who lost for just the second time in their past nine road games.

Trailing 1-0 in the first,

Boston scored two runs when Adrian Gonzalez had an RBI single and Middlebrooks followed with a run-scoring double off the Green Monster.

The Red Sox chased Delgado in the second and increased it to 4-1 on Pedroia's two-run double to the gap in left-center. Cristhian Martinez relieved with the bases loaded and got Gonzalez to bounce into an inning-ending double play.

Red Sox 8,
Braves 4

Next: at
Red Sox,
1:35 p.m.,
Sunday
(TBS)



Gamecocks eye third straight title

By ERIC OLSON
AP Sports Writer

OMAHA, Neb. — Arizona went to the College World Series as one of the hottest teams in the nation and swept three straight games to reach the championship round.

Yet head coach Andy Lopez and his players know few outside their fan base are paying much attention to them as the best-of-three series starts Sunday.

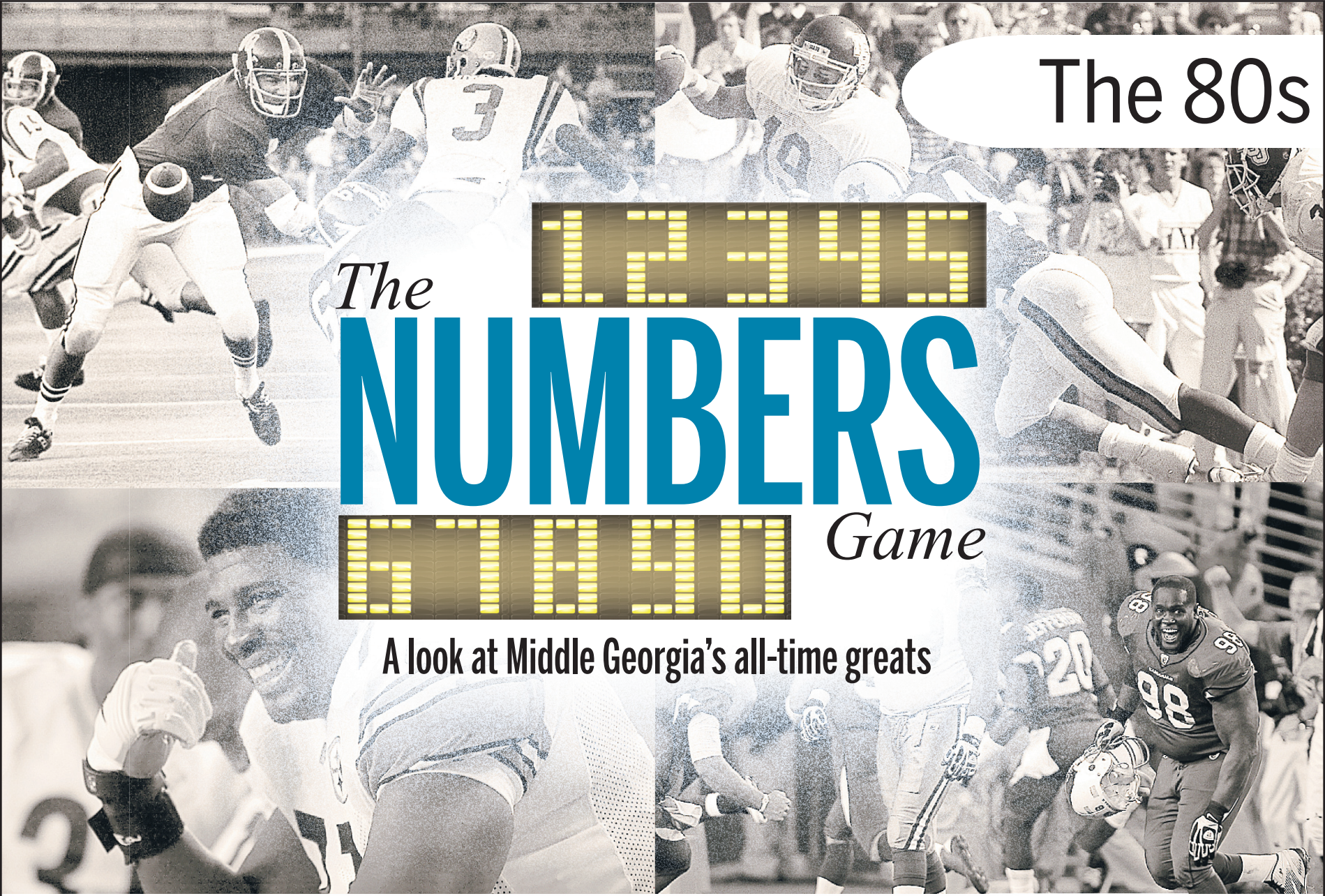
That's because South Car-

olina (49-18) has completed an improbable run to the finals, in which it will try to become the first team in 40 years to win a third straight title.

"We're just excited to be invited to the Ray Tanner Invitational," Lopez said Saturday.

At that, Tanner, the Gamecocks' 16th-year head coach, playfully punched Lopez to open their pre-finals news conference leading up to Sunday's first game.

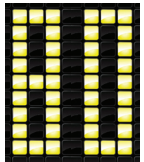
SEE CWS, 10C



The 80s

The NUMBERS Game

A look at Middle Georgia's all-time greats



Craig Ogletree, Lamar County, football

Bio: Ogletree went from an all-state career at Lamar County to an All-America career at Auburn. Ogletree finished the 1989 season with 113 tackles, 14 tackles for loss and 11 sacks for the SEC champion Tigers. He helped lead the Tigers to three consecutive SEC titles, earning All-America status from The Sporting News in 1989. Ogletree briefly played for the Cincinnati Bengals.

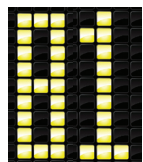
Why we picked him: One of the hardest selections in the 80s, No. 80 had plenty of worthy candidates from high school stars to college stars to solid NFL players. Ogletree had the best mix in the group, with the all-state high school career to go with the best college career of the No. 80s.

Others to consider
Ulysses Norris, Monticello, football: Norris parlayed an all-state high school career into a solid career at Georgia and then seven years in the NFL — where he caught eight career touchdowns — with the Detroit Lions and the Buffalo Bills from 1979-1985.

Steve Putnal, Lanier, football: The Poets' multi-sport star went on to start for Georgia Tech for two seasons, and he had 91 tackles with two interceptions in 1973.

Kirk Warner, Bleckley County, football: A great high-school athlete, Warner earned All-Middle

Georgia honors as a football and basketball player — he scored 2,000 career points — before playing tight end at Georgia from 1986-89.
Ben Utt, Vidalia, football: Utt followed an all-state high school career by starting for three years on the Georgia Tech offensive line and then played with the Baltimore and Indianapolis Colts from 1982-89.



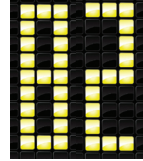
Takeo Spikes, Washington County, football

Bio: One of the greatest high school players in state history, Spikes was named the AP All-Classification Player of the Year as a senior after leading the Golden Hawks to a state championship in 1995. He also earned All-America honors from Parade Magazine and USA Today. He went on to an All-America career at Auburn, finishing with 136 tackles in 1997. Spikes left Auburn after his junior season and was drafted 13th overall by the Cincinnati Bengals. Spikes has played for five teams during a 14-year NFL career. He has made two Pro Bowls and has earned two All-Pro selections.

Why we picked him: Spikes truly is one of the greats to come out of Middle Georgia. He not only met the incredible hype coming out of high school, but he also surpassed it. The 35-year-old is still going strong in the NFL, having signed a three-year contract with the San Diego Chargers in

2011.
Others to consider
Mackel Harris, Americus, football: As good as Spikes has been, Harris was nearly his equal through college. Harris anchored a defense that allowed eight points all season in 1975 to go with 13 shutouts. He was a standout at Georgia Tech following his AP State Player of the Year selection as a high school senior.

John McIntyre, Monticello, football: Arguably the first great player in Monticello history, McIntyre helped lead his team to back-to-back championships in 1955 and 1956. He was named the AP State Player of the Year in 1956.



Larry Tharpe, Southwest, football

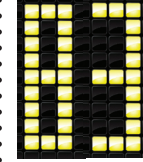
Bio: Tharpe wasn't a dominant high school player, but he continued to build and work hard to become a longtime professional. Tharpe earned all-conference honors in 1991 at Tennessee State before being drafted in the sixth round of the 1992 NFL draft by the Detroit Lions. Tharpe played for five different NFL teams before retiring with the Pittsburgh Steelers in 2000. He started 48 games in his eight-year pro career.

Why we picked him: Tharpe deserved the recognition for the dedication to his craft, going from good high school football player to NFL veteran.

Others to consider
Chuck Heard, Lanier, football: Heard missed half of his senior season at Lanier, but he peaked as a three-year starter at Georgia from 1969-71 and later as a successful doctor.

Robbie Hahn, Dublin, football: Hahn made two all-state teams (1963-64) at Dublin. Hahn's name is littered throughout the Furman

record book, and he still holds the single-season and career record for receiving yards per game. He made two All-Southern Conference teams.



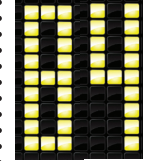
Mack Guest, Central, football

Bio: Guest was a multi-sport standout in the early years of Central, but he starred on the gridiron. He was named to the all-state team by the Atlanta Journal-Constitution in 1973 and 1974. Guest took his place on the Georgia offensive line in 1977 and started there for two years, including during Georgia's 9-2-1 season in 1978 where he started on offense with fellow Middle Georgians Ulysses Norris and Jimmy Womack. Guest was named to the AP All-SEC first team in 1978.

Why we picked him: While Tony Gilbert and Neil Callaway earned all-state honors once and an honorable mention nod another time, Guest is the only player in Central history to make two all-state teams.

Others to consider
Hugh Nall, R.E. Lee, football: Nall started at center during Georgia's national championship run in 1980 and later became a successful college coach at TCU, Mississippi and Auburn.

Mixon Robinson, Lanier, football: Like his friend Chuck Heard, Robinson battled injuries as a senior at Lanier, but he went on become team captain and started alongside Heard at Georgia in 1971.

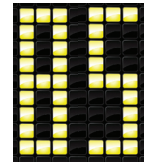


Greg Montgomery, Southwest, football

Bio: Montgomery stood out on the second football team at Southwest following integration before heading to Alabama. He became the first freshman to play under head coach Bear Bryant when the NCAA ruled freshmen could play in 1972. Montgomery lettered all four years at Alabama, first as an offensive lineman and later as a linebacker.

Why we picked him: Montgomery became Southwest's first football star while the basketball team was already beginning produce standout players. Any time a player becomes the first of anything while playing for Bryant, he deserves some recognition.

Others to consider
Edward Kendrick, Mount de Sales, football: Kendrick had one of the most impressive GISA careers, leading the Cavaliers to a state championship in 1997 before heading to Tennessee.

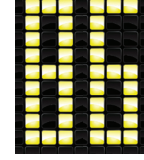


Peppi Zellner, Mary Persons, football

Bio: Zellner made an all-state team as a defensive end at Mary Persons in 1993. He was The Telegraph's All-Middle Georgia Player of the Year in 1993. Zellner played his college ball at Fort Valley State before getting drafted by the Dallas Cowboys in the fourth round of the 1999 NFL draft. Zellner played 89 games in the NFL for three teams in six seasons.

Why we picked him: Not only was Zellner a standout football player, he also made an All-Middle Georgia basketball team and played in the state basketball all-star game as a senior. It would be tough to find many multi-sport standouts better than Zellner during the 1990s.

Others to consider
Ron Wallace, Willingham, football: Wallace earned All-South Independent honors in 1969 at Florida State, and he still holds the single-game, season and career record for fumble recoveries at Florida State.



Nick Eason, Toombs County, football

Bio: Eason earned all-state honors in football and basketball at Toombs County. He played tight end and on defense, where he averaged more than 10 tackles per game his senior year. Eason earned All-ACC honors at Clemson in 2002 when he finished with seven sacks. He was also the Tigers' MVP as a sophomore. Eason was drafted in the fourth round by the Denver Broncos in 2003, and he has remained in the NFL for 10 seasons. Eason played in two Super Bowls, playing with the winning Pittsburgh Steelers in January 2009. He currently plays for the Arizona Cardinals.

Why we picked him: One of the toughest choices in the 80s, Eason was selected because of his decade-long professional career. It was a difficult choice between Eason and Ronnie West, who was named The Telegraph's Player of the Year in 1986.

Others to consider
Ronnie West, Wilcox County, football: West was one of the most electric players in Middle Georgia in the past 30 years. He won the Harlon Hill Trophy as Division II's best player at Pittsburg State in 1991. He played two years with the Minnesota Vikings.



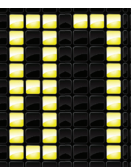
Nick Eason, who wore No. 93 with the Pittsburgh Steelers, won a Super Bowl during his time in the Steel City.



Marcus Robinson recorded nearly 4,700 receiving yards in the NFL and had his jersey retired at Peach County.

Telegraph file photo

NUMBERS FROM 8C



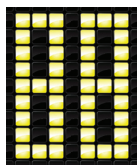
Rod Whipple, Wilkinson County football

Bio: Whipple was a true two-sport athlete in high school. He helped lead the Warriors' basketball team to state championships in 1999 and 2000. He starred on the football team, as well, coming up with 29 tackles for loss as a junior and finishing with five sacks as a senior. He earned all-state honors both years. Whipple played defensive end and later tight end at Clemson.

Why we picked him: Whipple's performance in two sports merits his inclusion in the list. Along with Xavier Whipple, Rod Whipple helped Wilkinson County head basketball coach Aaron Geter lay the groundwork for a championship program.

Others to consider

John Skalko, Mark Smith, football: Skalko followed a solid career at Mark Smith by earning two letters as a linebacker, in 1972 and 1973, at Georgia Tech.



Marcus Robinson, Peach County, football

Bio: Robinson was named to

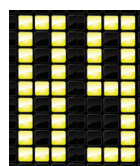
the all-state team as a defensive back as a junior and as a receiver following his senior season. He was named The Telegraph's Player of the Year in 1992. He played at South Carolina before being drafted by the Chicago Bears in the fourth round of the 1997 NFL draft. He played for four teams in 10 NFL seasons, finishing with 4,699 career receiving yards and 43 touchdowns. His 1,400 receiving yards in 1999 is the 64th best single season total in NFL history.

Why we picked him: Robinson is one of the most successful professional athletes to come out of Middle Georgia. From an all-state high school career to 10 years in the NFL, Robinson could have made the list wearing almost any number.

Others to consider

Fred Stokes, Vidalia, football: Stokes was more of a basketball player in high school before heading to Georgia Southern. He played 10 years in the NFL, starting for Washington in it Super Bowl win over Buffalo in 1992.

Al Gerhardt, Lanier, football: Gerhardt earned three letters at Georgia Tech from 1966-68.



Benji Roland, Dodge County, football

Bio: Roland earned all-state and All-Middle Georgia honors as a senior in 1984. He took his game to Auburn, where he

played for all four years. His best season came in 1988, when the nose guard helped lead the Tigers to the 1988 SEC championship. Roland was named an All-American following the season. He played in three games with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Why we picked him: It's hard to not acknowledge an All-American who was also an all-state high school player. Auburn led the nation in total defense, rushing defense and scoring defense during Roland's senior season.

Others to consider

Byron Walker, Warner Robins, football: Walker followed a solid career at The Citadel to play five seasons for the Seattle Seahawks from 1982-86.

Coming up in The Numbers Game

The Numbers Game continues throughout the summer:

- July 1:** The 70s
- July 8:** The 60s
- July 15:** The 50s
- July 22:** The 40s
- July 29:** The 30s
- Aug. 5:** The 20s
- Aug. 12:** The 10s
- Aug. 19:** Single digits

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To see even more athletes we considered, go to Jonathan Heeter's blog at macon.com/heetsblog.

Pick it then Click it

macon.com

The Telegraph



WIMBLEDON, 6C
Yaroslava Shvedova records the first perfect set for a woman in the professional era.



Bill Shanks Crowell blew his final chance

When a college football team dismisses its leading rusher from the previous season, there is usually more than a terse 72-word news release.

But that's really all Georgia head coach Mark Richt needed to say Friday when he kicked Isaiah Crowell out of the Georgia program following the running back's arrest earlier that day. The less Richt said, the more we knew how upset, disappointed and downright angry he had to be at having no choice but to make the decision.

"We have a dedicated and committed group of men who are working hard to prepare for the coming season," said Richt. "Our total focus will be directed toward the team and this effort."

That was it. There was no mention of Crowell in the entire comment. Richt didn't wish Crowell well in his future endeavors or none of the other usual scripted words. Richt instead talked about the very things that kept Crowell from achieving greatness in Athens: dedication, commitment, being a man, hard work, preparation, focus and effort.

There is no doubt Richt made the right decision, and he should be applauded for not letting the sun go down Friday before making Crowell an ex-player on his team. This was more than a strike three situation; it was a player given more than three chances to prove if he wanted to be an integral part of the Georgia football team.

Sure, these players are young men, and young men occasionally misbehave in college. But that's an empty excuse when players, staff and coaches beg someone to behave. Crowell was given every chance to become a star, but he's the one who got in his own way.

This is simple addition by subtraction. The other players know what Crowell had done during the past year. They probably know more than we know and know enough to realize this latest incident, whether Crowell is legally guilty or finds a way to beat the charges, was the final straw.

A team has to depend on every member, and when someone who is admittedly very important to that equation lets down his teammates again and again, they have to go.

It's going to be tough to replace the 850 yards Crowell ran for last season, but Georgia will be fine. Ken Malcome, Keith Marshall and Todd Gurley will form a solid trio and, at the same time, likely stay out of the newspaper for off-the-field incidents.

It's somewhat sad every time we see an athlete, whether it's in college or in the pros, squander an opportunity. Maybe they just get too cocky and think

SEE SHANKS, 4C

THE GAME CONTINUES...

The 70s. Pages 8-9C.



From 12 to 14

The era of the megaconference begins as Missouri and Texas A&M formally take their places at the SEC table



DAVID J. PHILLIP/Associated Press

This Sept. 17, 2011, file photo shows Texas A&M mascot Reveille along with Yell Leaders before the Aggies' football game against Idaho. The all-male Yell Leaders group is one of several traditions the school will bring to the SEC when it officially joins Sunday.

Aggies eager to officially say 'howdy'



Texas A&M

Nickname: Aggies
Founded: 1872
Enrollment: 50,054
Previous conference affiliation: Big 12, 1996-2012.
Bragging points: Texas A&M is home to the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum and one of six remaining senior military colleges. Its Corps of Cadets is the largest uniformed body outside the national service academics, according to the school.

By KRISTIE RIEKEN
AP Sports Writer

COLLEGE STATION, Texas — Texas A&M is using its move from the Big 12 to the SEC as a chance to reinvent itself from a regional brand to a national one.

But first the Aggies wanted to introduce themselves, or as they would put it, say "Howdy" to their new conference.

Roll Tide? War Eagle? Get ready for "Gig 'Em!"

In the past few months, one of the school's initiatives has been using its website, Facebook, Twitter and various SEC forums to educate people about A&M and answer questions concerning some of the unique traditions at this once all-male military school — the

male-only Yell Leaders instead of cheerleaders, for example, and the 12th Man tradition.

"I always tell people that Texas A&M has always been an SEC school in terms of our traditions, our spirit and our passion," said Jason Cook, Texas A&M's vice president for marketing and communications. "We've just been positioned in the wrong conference."

If that sounds like a jab, well, it probably is. The school's departure from the Big 12 was at time acrimonious and dominated by a falling out of sorts with Texas, its biggest rival. The Aggies were worried about the future of the Big 12 after the departures of Nebraska

SEE AGGIES, 4C

Tigers ready to make transition from Big 12

By R.B. FALLSTROM
AP Sports Writer



Missouri

Nickname: Tigers
Founded: 1839
Enrollment: 33,805
Previous conference affiliation: Big 12, 1996-2012.

Bragging points: First public university west of the Mississippi River, world's first journalism school (founded 1908), nation's first education college at a public university (founded 1868). Nickname recognizes area Civil War militia 'The Missouri Tigers.' Record enrollment 10 consecutive years.

COLUMBIA, Mo. — Perhaps the only downer in Missouri's jump to the SEC is the indefinite interruption of the feisty border conflict with Kansas.

Left behind in the Big 12, the Jayhawks were left feeling abandoned, jilted. Men's basketball head coach Bill Self said several times last season that he couldn't see scheduling the Tigers anytime soon.

There seem to be no hard feelings anywhere else, including the big city just down the road that used to benefit from the Missouri-Kansas rivalry. Missouri athletics director Mike Alden took delight this past week announcing that a \$30 million gift that jump-started

SEE TIGERS, 4C



JEFF ROBERSON/Associated Press

Missouri chancellor Brady J. Deaton, left, and athletics director Mike Alden, second from right, will see their school formally join the SEC on Sunday, the end of a process that began last fall when Missouri announced the move from its longtime home, the Big 12.

Braves escape hot day with win over Nationals



DAVID TULIS/Associated Press

Atlanta assistant trainer Jim Lovell drapes a wet towel over Martin Prado to cool him down during Saturday's game against Washington.

By GEORGE HENRY
Associated Press

ATLANTA — Mike Minor won for just the second time in 12 starts and the Atlanta Braves overcame 104-degree heat to beat Stephen Strasburg and the Washington Nationals 7-5 on Saturday.

Strasburg (9-3) left after just three innings because of weather-related issues. He didn't return to begin the fourth, tying for the shortest outing of his 33-start career.

Braves officials reported no major health problems among the announced crowd of 26,491. The team credited eight free water stations at Turner Field with helping fans cool off.

Strasburg allowed two hits, three

runs and four walks. Throwing 36 of his 67 pitches for strikes, Strasburg struck out four to reach 122, most in the majors.

Strasburg took extra time between pitches and walked slowly between innings. He hit an RBI single and left trailing 3-2 after the Braves' three-run third.

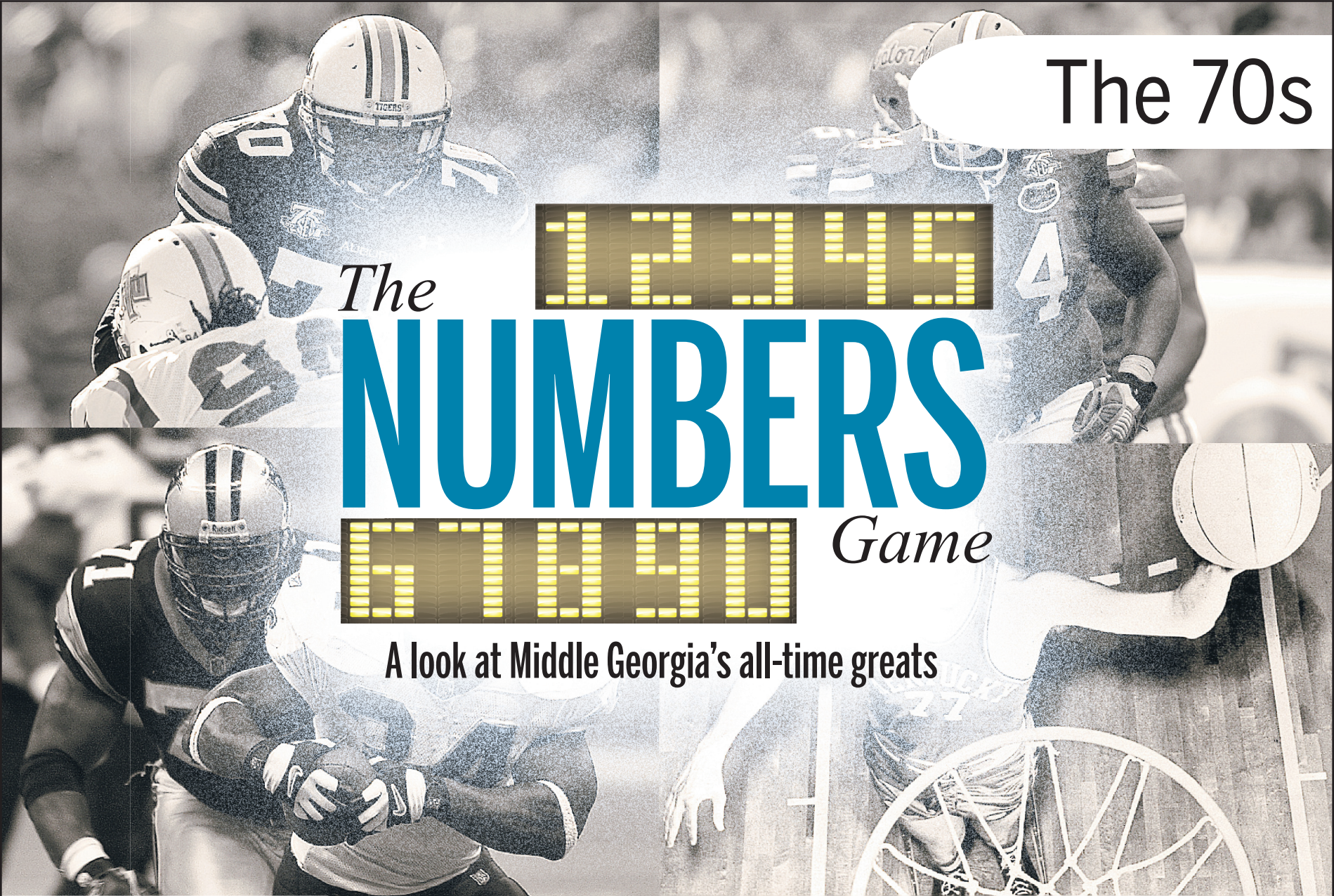
Nationals manager Davey Johnson came out of the dugout after the third to tell home plate umpire Marvin Hudson that Strasburg

**Braves 7,
Nationals 5**

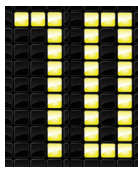
Next: vs. Nationals, 1:35 p.m., Saturday (Fox Sports South)



SEE BRAVES, 4C



A look at Middle Georgia's all-time greats



Wayne Johnson, Willingham, football

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Go to macon.com for more photos of the players who were chosen, as well as Jonathan Heeter's podcast.

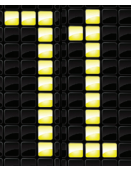
Bio: Johnson was named the best player in Macon as a high school senior in 1964 during the Rams' best season in school history. "Buffalo" played in the 1965 GHSA All-Star Game in Atlanta. He signed with Florida State, where he would

letter three years beginning in 1967.

Why we picked him: Johnson earned all-state honors in 1964, making him one of just six players in school history to make an all-state team.

Others to consider

Nic Riley, Houston County, football: Riley is the only player in Houston County history to make two all-state teams when he made it in 2003-2004. He played college ball at Troy.



George Collins, Warner Robins, football

Bio: Collins was just the fifth all-state player in Warner Robins history when he made the team in 1973. He then went to Georgia, where he started at guard for two seasons. Collins was a starter on the Bulldogs' 1976 SEC championship team, but it was a year later when he received most of his accolades. He was voted to the All-SEC team in 1977, and he was named the top SEC lineman by the Birmingham News. The Sporting News named Collins to its All-America team in 1977. Collins was drafted by St. Louis, where he played for five seasons. He also played for the Jacksonville Bulls of the USFL. Collins is currently the head football coach at Rutland, and he also coached Houston County and Perry.

Why we picked him: Collins was one of the early building blocks of the Warner Robins football program.

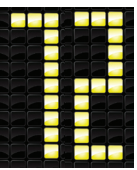
Bill Spivey, back, played for Warner Robins before going on to a standout career with Kentucky in the early 1950s that included the Most Outstanding Player award from the 1951 NCAA tournament.

Collins was a senior during Robert Davis' first year as a head coach, and Collins played a pivotal role in the Demons' first-ever 10-win season in 1973.

Others to consider

Tim Walker, Northside, football: Walker went from all-state honors at Northside to making four straight all-conference teams at Savannah State. He then became Northside's first ever pro football player when he played for the Seattle Seahawks in 1980.

Alonzo Jackson, Americus, football: An all-state pick at Americus from 1996-98, Jackson started for two years at Florida State before playing 18 games in the NFL for Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and the New York Giants.



Julius Adams, Ballard-Hudson, football

Bio: Adams followed a high school career at Ballard-Hudson with a two-time all-conference run at Texas Southern in 1968 and 1970. The New England Patriots picked Adams in the second round of the 1971 NFL draft. Adams went on to play his entire 15-season career for the Patriots. Adams started as a rookie in 1971 and earned UPI All-Rookie honors. He earned a Pro Bowl appearance in 1980 after leading the Patriots with nine sacks. Adams played in the Patriots' Super Bowl loss to the Chicago Bears at the



TELEGRAPH FILE PHOTO

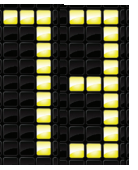
Al Lucas, who died from injuries suffered in a 2005 Arena Football League game, was named the top defensive player in Division I-AA in 1999 while playing for Troy.

end of the 1985 season.

Why we picked him: Few Middle Georgians have as illustrious pro career as Adams. He combined quality with longevity. Adams made both the Patriots' All-1970s team and the All-1980s team. He also was selected to the Patriots' 35th anniversary team in 1994, and he remained on the team when the 50th anniversary team was picked in 2009.

Others to consider

Jiggy Smaha, Lanier, football: Smaha was named the state lineman of the year as a high school senior in 1963 before lettering at Georgia and eventually being drafted by the Cleveland Browns. **J.W. McKinnie, Mark Smith, football:** McKinnie earned three letters as a lineman and receiver at Florida State in the late 1960s.



Craig Hertwig, Mark Smith, football

Bio: Hertwig grew into a standout football player at Georgia, where he played tackle from 1972-74. The 6-foot-8 giant earned the full-time starting role his final two seasons. Hertwig was named to the AP All-SEC and AP All-America team in 1974. He was the Bulldogs' offensive captain as a senior. The Detroit Lions drafted Hertwig in the fourth round in 1975. He started 14 games for the Lions in 1977. Hertwig died in May.

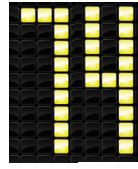
Why we picked him: Hertwig gained the edge over George Foster because of quality of his

college career. Foster was better in high school, and the two are pretty even as pro players. Only two Georgia offensive tackles — Mike Wilson and Matt Stinchcomb — have earned AP All-America honors in the 38 years following Hertwig's designation, and only four Georgia offensive tackles have ever made the AP All-America team.

Others to consider

George Foster, Southeast, football: Arguably the best player in Southeast history, Foster started for a season at Georgia before being drafted in the first round of the 2003 NFL draft by Denver. He played for Detroit, Cleveland and Seattle.

Pete Jenkins, Hawkinsville, football: Jenkins earned all-state honors in 1958 and later served as an assistant coach at Auburn and LSU and with the Philadelphia Eagles.



Mike Washington, Baldwin, football

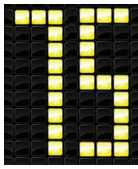
Bio: Washington became the first Baldwin player to earn back-to-back selections to all-state teams when he earned recognition from the Atlanta Journal-Constitution in 1989 and 1990. He played in the GHSA's all-star game following his senior season. Washington earned four letters at South Carolina following his standout career at Baldwin.

Why we picked him: Only four Baldwin players — Washington, Dante Beckham, Corico Hawkins and Darius Marshall — have made two all-state teams in their high school careers.

Others to consider

Marc McCall, Wilcox

County, football: An all-state pick in 1991, McCall played college ball at East Carolina.



Maurice Hurt, Baldwin, football

Bio: Hurt was an all-state selection as a senior at Baldwin in 2005, and he was one of the top prospects in Georgia coming out of high school. Hurt went to Florida, where he played in 41 games, including 17 starts. His versatility was evident during the 2010 season where he started at three different positions on the offensive line. The Washington Redskins selected Hurt in the seventh round of the 2011 NFL draft. Hurt started eight games during his rookie season for the Redskins.

Why we picked him: Hurt dominated as a high school offensive lineman before lettering for four seasons at Florida. He was a part of several memorable teams at Florida, including the 2008 SEC championship squad. He protected Tim Tebow while playing for the Gators in their 2009 BCS championship game win over Oklahoma.

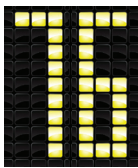
Others to consider

Cedric Cornish, Northside, football: Cornish made the all-state team in 1981 before signing with Georgia.

Jimmy Harper, Dodge County, football: Harper started for two seasons at Georgia earning second-team All-SEC honors (AP) in 1981 and first-team All-SEC honors (UPI) in 1982.

James Holland, Willingham, football: Holland was an all-around good athlete, holding school records in baseball, basketball and track and field before signing with Georgia Tech.

Terry Jones, Washington County, football: Jones didn't receive much recognition in high school, but he played at Alabama and later for seven seasons with the Green Bay Packers.



Al Lucas, Northeast, football

Bio: Lucas earned honorable mention all-state honors from the AP and Atlanta Journal-Constitution as a senior in 1995. He went on to a standout career at Troy, where he earned All-Southern Conference honors in 1998 and 1999. Lucas dominated during the 1999 season, earning the Buck Buchanan Award as Division I-AA's top defensive player. He helped lead the Trojans to the

SEE NUMBERS, 9C



Stratford product Trevor Jenkins went on to start 37 consecutive games at Middle Tennessee State.

BEAU CABELL/bcabell@macon.com

Coming up in The Numbers Game

The Numbers Game continues throughout the summer:
July 8: The 60s
July 15: The 50s
July 22: The 40s
July 29: The 30s
Aug. 5: The 20s
Aug. 12: The 10s
Aug. 19: Single digits

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To see even more athletes we considered, go to Jonathan Heeter's blog at macon.com/heetsblog.

NUMBERS FROM 8C

I-AA quarterfinals and earned AP All-America honors. Lucas played two seasons for the Carolina Panthers and later three seasons in the Arena Football League. He made the AFL All-Rookie team while helping the Tampa Bay Storm win the ArenaBowl in 2003. While playing with the AFL's Los Angeles Avengers, Lucas died in 2005 after injuries suffered during a game.

Why we picked him: Lucas was a dominant player on the field, particularly at Troy and later in the AFL. But his legacy has been just as great. The AFL renamed its Hero Award the Al Lucas Award, and the Al Lucas Memorial Scholarship Fund continues.

Others to consider

Tony Guyton, Dublin, football: A standout at Dublin, Guyton earned three letters at South Carolina and earned All-South Independent honors in 1985.

Kelvin McDavis, Northside, football: McDavis was a four-year letterwinner at Valdosta State and started on the Blazers' 2004 national championship team.

Red McDaniel, Central, football: Playing at Georgia Tech, McDaniel won the John Heisman Award as the Yellow Jackets' best defensive lineman in 1975. He started two years for Tech.

Seth Watts, Washington County, football: The two-time all-state offensive lineman and top-level recruit played at Georgia.



Bill Spivey, Warner Robins, basketball

Bio: Spivey started out at Jordan in Columbus, came to Warner Robins and attended school in Bonaire. He later was cut from the team at Lanier and played on the first teams at Warner Robins, according to Telegraph archives, where he averaged 22 and 29 points during two seasons. Spivey then headed to Kentucky to play for Adolph Rupp, becoming one of the first prominent 7-footers

in NCAA basketball. Spivey led Kentucky to the 1951 NCAA championship game against Kansas State. Spivey was named Most Outstanding Player of the tournament to go along with All-America honors and two All-SEC teams. He broke the school record for single-game scoring, and his 31 rebounds in a game in 1951 remains a school record 61 years later. Spivey, however, was later implicated but not convicted in a point-shaving scandal, which ended his college eligibility and killed a chance at a NBA career. Kentucky retired Spivey's number posthumously, and he was also inducted into the Kentucky Sports Hall of Fame.

Why we picked him:

The potential scandal notwithstanding, Spivey is one of the most dominant basketball players to ever come out of Middle Georgia. Can there be many bigger honors than having your jersey retired by Kentucky basketball? He didn't appear to be finished progressing as a player before he received a lifetime ban from the NBA. No one will ever know just how great Spivey might have been in the NBA.

Quotable: "(Spivey) had the potential to be one of the top five centers to have ever played the game," former Kentucky head coach Joe B. Hall was quoted as saying to CBS SportsLine.com reporter Gregg Doyel in 2005.

Others to consider

Ben Claxton, Dublin, football: After an all-state senior year at Dublin, Claxton started 37 games at Mississippi, and he made two AP All-SEC second teams before playing for the Atlanta Falcons and Arizona Cardinals.

Neil Jordan, Monticello, football: Jordan scored 25 touchdowns for Monticello in 1956 as the team went 12-0 and won a state championship.

Willie McIntee, Dooly County, football: McIntee earned four letters at South Carolina beginning in 1983 after a strong prep career.

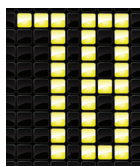
Victor Perry, Fitzgerald, football: Perry was all-state in 1982 before earning starting on the offensive line for three years at Georgia. He played in the NFL



NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

Ballard-Hudson product Julius Adams, center, played 15 seasons with the New England Patriots.

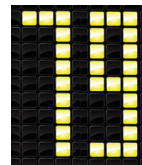
with the St. Louis Cardinals in 1987.



Antwain Daniels, Mary Persons, football

Bio: Daniels earned an all-state selection as a senior after totaling 35 pancake blocks as a senior. He allowed only two sacks in 30 career high school games. He went to Auburn, where he earned three letters as an offensive lineman.

Why we picked him: Daniels followed a solid high school career with three years of productive play at Auburn.



Trevor Jenkins, Stratford, football

Bio: Jenkins capped a standout prep career with 27 tackles for loss and eight sacks as a senior at Stratford. He won state titles in track and field and later earned won the Selby Buck Award as Middle Georgia's top high school athlete. Jenkins started 37 consecutive games at Middle Tennessee State. He finished his career with 47 games played, most by any player in the FBS era, and with 25 tackles for loss, which was tied for eighth most in school history. He was

voted Middle Tennessee Student Athlete of the Year in 2008, and he earned second-team All-Sun Belt Conference honors and was a finalist for the Rudy Award.

Why we picked him: Jenkins is one of the most dominant players in GISA history. Sandwiched between the other two highly recruited Stratford defensive linemen in Le Kevin Smith and Michael Lemon, Jenkins might have had the best college career of the three.

Others to consider

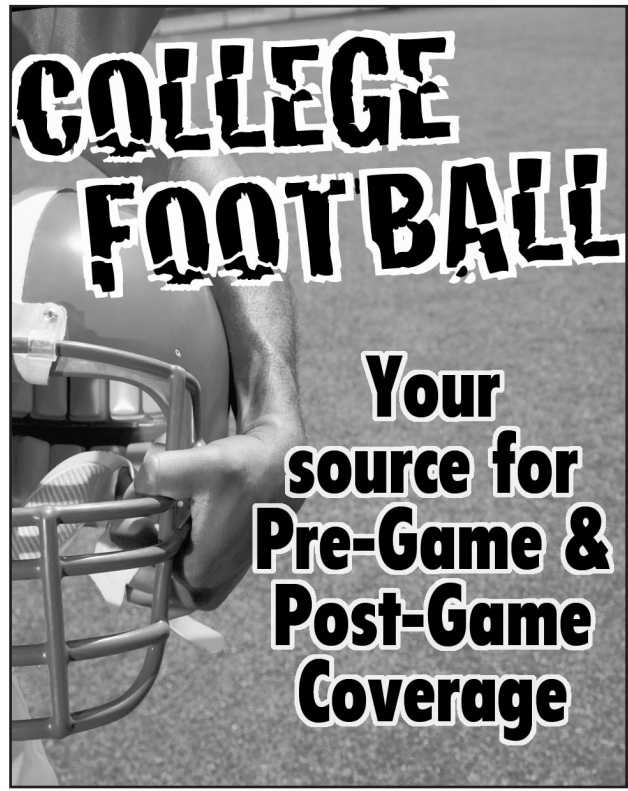
Walter Rouse, Crisp County, football: Rouse landed on an all-state team in 1991 before earning two letters at Georgia.

Ben Harden, Perry, football: Harden made an all-state team in 2005 before signing with Georgia.



WOODY MARSHALL/wmarshall@macon.com

Before entering coaching, Rutland football head coach George Collins, left, was a two-year starter at Georgia and played in the NFL and the USFL.





GOLF, 10C

Na Yeon Choi is in the lead following Saturday's play at the U.S. Women's Open.



Bill Shanks

Atlanta's rotation must get better

There are many things the Atlanta Braves must do better in the second half to contend for the NL wild card.

Yes, I'm giving the NL East to the Washington Nationals. It's going to be tough to knock them out of first place.

But Atlanta still has a shot at being one of two

Braves 6, Phillies 3

Next: at Phillies, 1:35 p.m., Sunday (Fox Sports South)



will be the starting rotation, which must be better for the Braves to win around 90 games.

Atlanta entered the weekend with the fifth-worst earned run average for starting pitchers in the NL. Last year, the Braves had the fifth-best ERA in the league.

Help is on the way. Ben Sheets, a former star in Milwaukee, signed last week and pitched well Wednesday in his first Double-A tune-up. Sheets will start again Monday for Mississippi, and then the Braves will determine if he'll be ready to go after the All-Star break.

Even if Sheets is 85 percent of what he used to be, the Braves will have a good pitcher. Sheets was one of the best pitchers in the game before he got hurt after the 2008 season. He says he's healthy now, so acquiring Sheets was a good gamble.

Jair Jurrjens, who pitches Sunday against Philadelphia, has been better than expected in his three starts back from the minor leagues. There is a worry that the other shoe is going to drop and he'll return back to his mediocre ways. But expect the Braves to go with Jurrjens as long as he gives them reason to go with him.

Randall Delgado and Mike Minor have been very frustrating this season. There is zero doubt these two kids can pitch. They've both had great games, and then they've turned around and been horrible.

Delgado has gotten the worst run support of all the starters, getting only 2.9 runs per start from his offense. That's the main reason he has lost a league-leading nine games.

We watched him pitch well this week against the Chicago Cubs, and Delgado had great starts against Baltimore, Miami, Cincinnati and Philadelphia. But then we remember the awful start he had two weeks ago in Boston when he looked overwhelmed.

SEE SHANKS, 10C

THE GAME CONTINUES...

The 60s. Pages 3-4C.



ALASTAIR GRANT/Associated Press

Serena Williams celebrates with her trophy after defeating Agnieszka Radwanska to win the women's final Saturday at Wimbledon.

Five-time champion

Health scares put in the past, Serena Williams is back on top following her championship win at Wimbledon

By HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Tennis Writer

WIMBLEDON, England — For Serena Williams, the low point came in early 2011, when she spent hours laying around her home, overwhelmed by a depressing series of health scares that sent her to the hospital repeatedly and kept her away from tennis for 10 months.

The high point came Saturday on Centre Court at Wimbledon, when Williams dropped down to the grass, hands covering her face. She was all the way back, a Grand Slam champion yet again.

Her serve as good as there

is, her grit as good as ever, Williams was dominant at the start and finish, beating Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland 6-1, 5-7, 6-2 to win a fifth championship at the All England Club and 14th major title overall, ending a two-year drought.

"I just remember, I was on the couch and I didn't leave the whole day, for two days. I was just over it. I was praying, like, 'I can't take any more. I've endured enough. Let me be able to get through this,'" recalled Williams, a former No. 1 whose ranking slid to 175th after a fourth-round

SEE SERENA, 10C



ALASTAIR GRANT/Associated Press

Serena Williams, right, embraces her father, Richard Williams, center, as her sister, Venus, looks on following Saturday's women's final at Wimbledon.

WRALL West has strong start

By ANGELA WOOLEN
awoolen@macon.com

WARNER ROBINS — Leyton Pinckney hit a two-run home run in the first inning for the Warner Robins American Little League West all-star team in the team's district tournament opener Saturday, and the team never looked back.

Warner Robins West won 14-1 in four innings over Western Little League to conclude the first day of action at the seven-team, double-elimination Georgia District 5 tournament.

Pinckney went 2-for-3, adding a double to his home run, and also pitched for a third of an inning.

Also having home runs were Chase Padgett, who had a two-out grand slam in the top of the fourth, and Cody Winner, who hit the ball over the left-field fence to score three in the top of the second.

"We were fortunate we made some runs early," manager Martin Pinckney said.

Warner Robins led 5-0 after one inning, 8-0 after two and 10-0 after Conner Bookout's two-run double in the third.

SEE ROBINS, 10C



ANGELA WOOLEN/awoolen@macon.com

Warner Robins West's Tee Adams jumps for the ball to make an out at first base during Saturday's Little League district tournament game against Western.

Stewart slips past field for win at Daytona

By JENNA FRYER
AP Motorsports Writer

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Tony Stewart charged past Daytona 500 winner Matt Kenseth on the final lap Saturday night, then held on to win as his challengers stacked up in a melee at Daytona International Speedway.

Kenseth and Roush Fenway Racing teammate Greg Biffle likely would have made one final attempt to beat Stewart, but Biffle wiggled and cars began sliding all over the track.

Nobody could then catch Stewart, who sailed away to his third win of the season. The defending Sprint Cup Series champion is tied with Brad Keselowski for most wins this season.

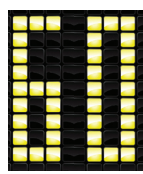
Roughly 90 minutes before the race, NASCAR announced AJ Allmendinger had been suspended for failing a random drug test. Sam Hornish Jr. replaced him in the car.



The 60s

The NUMBERS Game

A look at Middle Georgia's all-time greats



Steve Wilson, Willingham/Southwest, football

macon.com ONLINE
Go to macon.com for more photos of the players who were chosen, as well as Jonathan Heeter's podcast.

Bio: After graduating from Southwest, Wilson earned three varsity letters at Georgia. He started his final two seasons — at guard in 1974, then replacing fellow Macon native Craig Hertwig at tackle in 1975. Wilson

became a fifth-round pick of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in 1976. Wilson played in the NFL for 10 seasons, all with the Buccaneers. He was the final original Buccaneers player to retire. He anchored the offensive line on three playoff teams for Tampa Bay.

Why we picked him: One of the first standout players for Southwest, Wilson got better with each step along the way in his career. He went from good high school player to very good college player to one of the best centers in the NFL. He was a steady force in the Buccaneers' progression from laughing stock expansion franchise to perennial playoff contender from 1979-82.

Others to consider

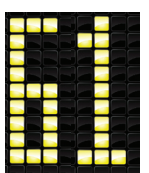
Mark Stewart, Northside, football: A current assistant coach at his alma mater, Stewart signed with Florida State out of high school after an All-Middle Georgia senior season.

Jimmy Moore, Hawkinsville,

football: Moore played on two of the best teams in Red Devils history. The Red Devils lost to West Point in the 1958 state championship game. Hawkinsville, however, bounced back a year later when it beat North Cobb 6-0 in the championship game. Moore was named lineman of the year by the Atlanta Journal-Constitution following the win.

Gordon Watson, Mary

Persons, football: Watson was named The Telegraph's Player of the Year in 1974.



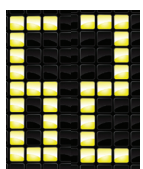
Danny Carpenter, Northside, football

Bio: Carpenter earned All-Middle Georgia honors as a standout lineman for Northside in 1967. He helped the Eagles to a 6-3-1 record that year, which gave the school its best winning percentage to that point in school history. He also was on the first two Northside teams to beat Warner Robins.

Carpenter later went 33-13 as Northside's head coach from 1982-1985 and became superintendent of the Houston County school system.

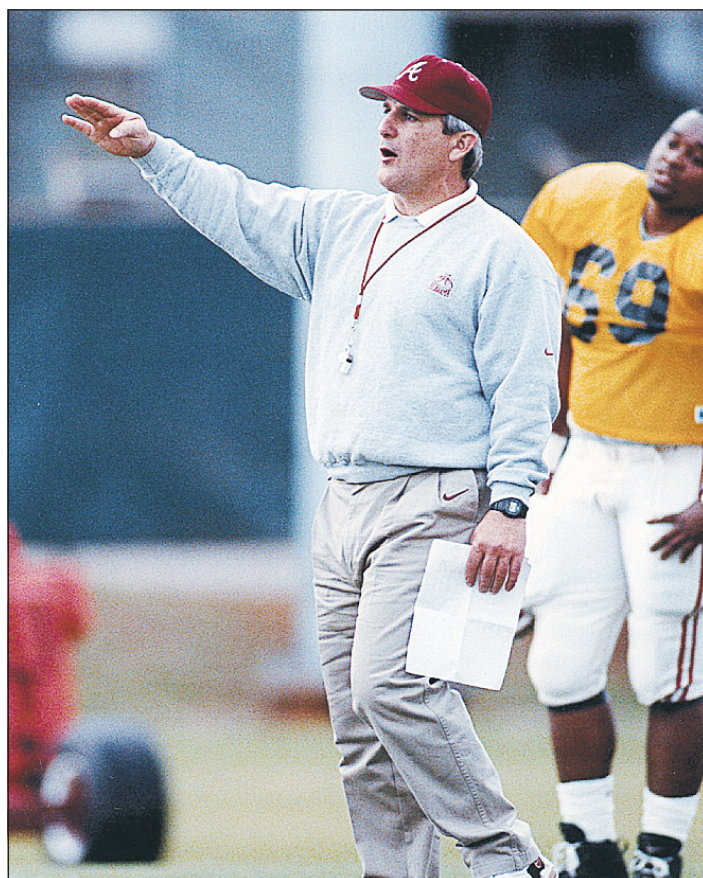
Why we picked him:

Carpenter was one of the key players in the early years of the Northside football program. He earned honorable mention all-state honors from the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, a distinction that only two Northside players had received before him.



Jim Parker, Ballard-Hudson, football

Bio: Parker grew up in Macon and attended Ballard-Hudson for his first three years before moving to Toledo, Ohio, for his senior season. During his senior year at Toledo's Scott High School, Parker caught the eye of Ohio State's then-head football coach, Woody Hayes, in 1952 and went on to a stellar college career. Parker played on both sides of the line and helped the Buckeyes win the national championship in 1954. During the next two seasons, Parker earned two All-America selections, won the Outland Trophy and finished eighth in Heisman Trophy voting. Parker was the first-round selection of the Baltimore Colts. He played 11 seasons for the Colts, making eight Pro



University of Alabama

Neil Callaway played football for Central and Alabama in the 1970s before moving on to a coaching career that included time as the head coach at UAB.

Bowl appearances and earning 10 All-Pro selections. He won two NFL championships with the Colts and was elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility.

Parker's obituary in the New York Times said he "is widely regarded as the best

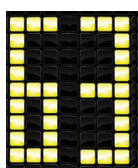
offensive lineman ever."

Why we picked him: Although he didn't graduate from high school in Macon, Parker is undoubtedly one of Macon's and Georgia's greatest athletes. In addition to the Pro Football Hall of Fame, he's in the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame, Ohio State's Varsity O Hall of Fame and the College Football Hall of Fame. He also made Sports Illustrated's All-Century college team and the NFL's 75th anniversary team.

Others to consider

Carlie McNeil, Willingham, football: McNeil was one of seven all-state players in Willingham history. McNeil signed with Florida State.

Chip Minton, Southwest, football/bobsledding: Minton wore No. 62 as a football player at Southwest, but he became known for making two Olympic bobsledding teams and winning a bronze in the event at the 1997 World Championships.



Neil Callaway, Central, football

Bio: After landing on the honorable mention all-state list as a junior, Callaway was named to the all-state team in 1972 after helping lead the Chargers to an 11-1-1 record. The Chargers lost to Lakeside-DeKalb in the state championship game. Callaway played in two Sugar Bowls and one Orange Bowl as a player at Alabama from 1975-77. His versatility allowed him to play five different positions for the Crimson Tide. Callaway went on to coach at six different

colleges, including stints at Auburn, Alabama and Georgia, before becoming the head coach at UAB in 2006.

Why we picked him: Callaway played on some of the great Central football teams that helped pave the way for the Chargers' 1975 championship run. His outstanding career as a player helped earn him induction into the Macon Sports Hall of Fame. Callaway earned Alabama's Frank Thomas Award as the team's outstanding athlete in 1977.

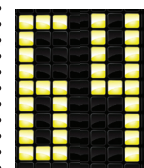
Others to consider

Harold Hallman, Southwest, football: Hallman earned All-SEC honors in 1985 before embarking on a standout career in the Canadian Football League. He made four all-star teams with Toronto and Calgary, and he won a Grey Cup with Toronto.

Jason Respert, Northside, football: Respert made all-state teams as a high school player in 1998 and 1999 before heading to Tennessee, where he lettered for four seasons and became team captain as a senior. He currently is the head football coach at Douglas County.

Tommy Seward, Lanier, football: The standout offensive lineman signed with South Carolina.

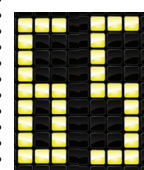
Sid Smith, Warner Robins, football: Smith attended Warner Robins during the Demons' five-year run of nine wins per season from 1968-72. Smith went on to play at Alabama.



Roger Womack, Tift County, football

Bio: Womack was the best player on arguably the best Tift County team prior to the Gene Brodie era that began in 1976. Womack earned All-Middle Georgia Lineman of the Year honors from The Telegraph in 1966.

Why we picked him: Womack was the first All-Middle Georgia Player of the Year for Tift County. He was also a stalwart on the defense that stopped top-ranked Moultrie in an upset over the Packers in the first-ever game at the stadium that would later be called Brodie Field.



Justin Brown, Warner Robins, football

Bio: Brown was a consensus all-state selection in 2004 after helping lead Warner Robins to the state championship. Brown went to Furman, where he earned All-Southern Conference honors in 2006 and 2007. He also earned Sports Network



The Ohio State University

Jim Parker played football at Ballard-Hudson before moving to Toledo, Ohio, for his senior year of high school. He went on to become a two-way starter for Woody Hayes at Ohio State.



Stratford's Le Kevin Smith followed up a strong high school career by playing a leading role on Nebraska's "Blackshirt" defense and a professional career that included time with New England and Denver.

NUMBERS FROM 3C

honorably mentioned All-America honors in 2007. Brown is now an assistant coach at Mercer.


Why we picked him: Brown was the captain on the Demons' 2004 team that went 14-0-1 and ended a 16-year championship drought for Warner Robins.

Others to consider

Dion Armstrong, Peach County, football: A three-year high school starter, Armstrong helped the Trojans win state titles in 2005 and 2006 before signing with Maryland.

Greg Crabb, Dublin, football: Crabb made an all-state team at Dublin before lettering for three years at South Carolina.

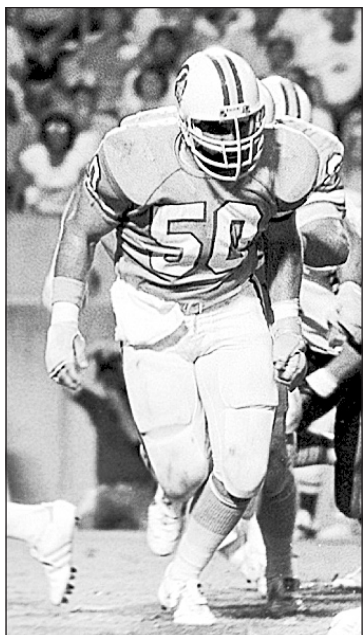
Haywood Simmons, Southwest, football: Simmons went from Southwest to lettering two years and winning the 1994 Rose Bowl at Wisconsin.



Le Kevin Smith, Stratford, football

Bio: Smith's dominant high school career was highlighted by being named the USA Today Georgia Player of the Year in 2000. He was The Telegraph's City Player of the Year the same year and earned Georgia Player of the Year honors from the Macon Touchdown Club. Smith started 35 games during his career at Nebraska, where he would become one of the leaders of the Cornhuskers' "Blackshirt" defense as a senior. He finished his college career with 36 tackles for loss and 9.5 sacks. He was named to the Sporting News' Big 12 All-Freshmen team. The New England Patriots drafted Smith in the sixth round in 2006, and he played for both the Patriots and the Denver Broncos from 2006-10.

Why we picked him: Smith is one of the greatest football players in GISA history. He



Tampa Bay Buccaneers
Willingham and Southwest product Steve Wilson played 10 seasons with Tampa Bay, becoming the final original Buccaneers player to retire.

completely dominated the association during his tenure at Stratford, which included record-breaking performances in track and field.

Others to consider

Antron Harper, Dodge County, football: The undersized lineman started 38 straight games and anchored an offensive line that led the nation in rushing yards. Harper landed on the Rimington and Outland Trophy watch lists, and he made the All-East team as a senior at Navy alongside future NFL stars Matt Ryan, Ray Rice, LeSean McCoy and Chris Long.

Otis Lindsey, Dodge County, football: Lindsey played on Clemson's 1981 national championship team, and he started five games at linebacker a year later.



Carl Summers, Willingham, football/wrestling

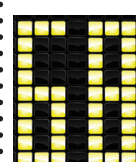
Bio: Summers left Willingham

following a solid high school career, but he took a detour to college by serving three tours in Vietnam. While serving in Vietnam, Summers was awarded the Navy Cross, two Silver Stars, three Purple Hearts and a Navy and Marine Corps Medal for Bravery. After returning, Summers competed on Tennessee-Martin's first wrestling team, serving as a captain for two years. Summers is in UT-Martin's Athletics Hall of Fame.

Why we picked him: Summers was one of the toughest athletes to ever come out of Willingham, or maybe even Macon altogether. He held Marine and world records in fitness and weightlifting. He also lettered three years on UT-Martin's football team.

Others to consider

Shaquan Hicks, Washington County, football: Hicks earned all-state honors in 2006 on his way to helping the Golden Hawks back to the state semifinals. He signed with Florida International.



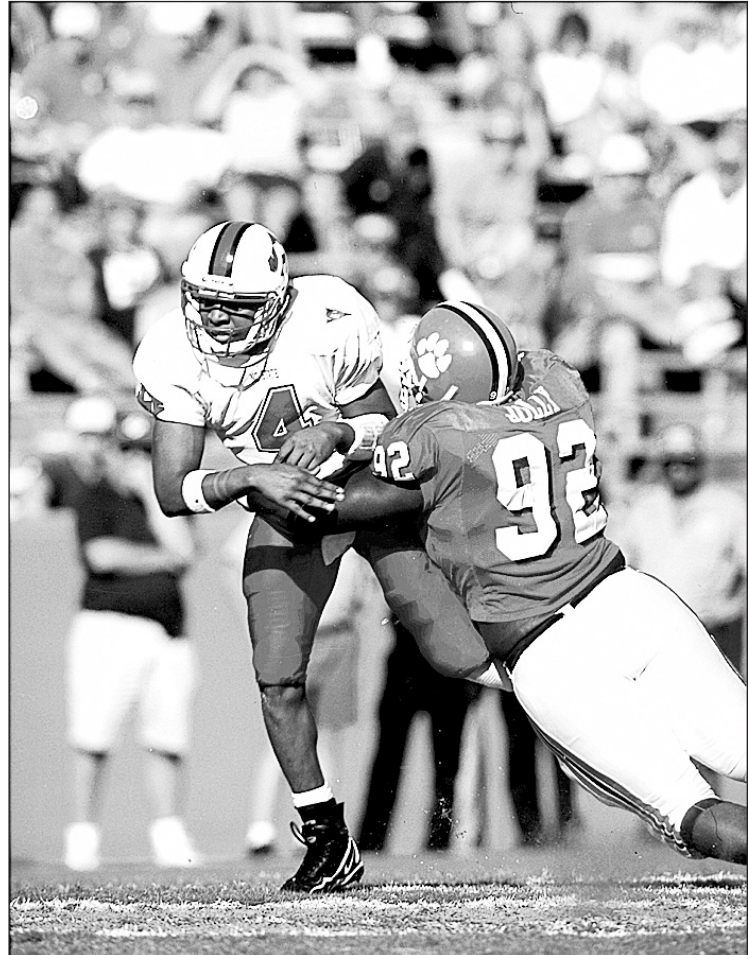
Dustin Chancellor, Peach County, football

Bio: Chancellor was an all-state standout on the Trojans' offensive line that won the 2005 state championship. He moved on to Furman, where knee injuries derailed his four-year college career. He did play in 11 games as one of four true freshmen to suit up for the Paladins.

Why we picked him: Quarterback Antonio Henton, wide receivers Chris Slaughter and Udom Umoh and running backs Mareo Howard and Duranzo Brown received much of the attention during the Trojans' record-breaking offensive season in 2005. Someone, however, had to lead the way up front, and Chancellor did just that.

Others to consider

Gerald Payton, Central, football: Payton helped anchor a



Clemson University
Peach County product Terry Jolly (92) was a first-team All-ACC selection as a senior at Clemson.

defense that led the Chargers win the 1975 state championship. He earned All-City honors from The Telegraph following the season.



Terry Jolly, Peach County, football

Bio: After a strong junior season that resulted in all-state honorable mention recognition, Jolly followed with a dominant defensive season as a senior. He earned consensus all-state honors while playing on the same defense with Adrian Hollingshed in 1995. He became an anchor up front for Clemson in 1999 and 2000. He made second-team All-

ACC as a junior and landed on the first team as a senior. The State, the Columbia, S.C., newspaper, named Jolly to its Clemson All-Decade Team in 2009.

Why we picked him: Jolly played a part in setting the stage for what was to come under then-Peach County head coach Rodney Walker. He went from being one of the best defensive linemen in Georgia to becoming one of the best in the ACC.

Others to consider

Johnnie Farms, Perry, football: Farms made all-state teams as a junior and senior (2007 and 2008) to become the third Perry player — alongside Kanorris Davis and Lee St. John — to achieve the honor. He now plays at Memphis.

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COLLEGE FOOTBALL, 2B

Westside product Robert Brown's season is up in the air because of upcoming back surgery.



Bill Shanks

Malloy honored by tournament

Frank Malloy just thought he was going to dinner to talk shop with Frank Shurling. "Have you ever eaten at Barefoot Tavern?" Shurling asked. "No, let's try it," Malloy replied. When the two Franks got there, they happened to run into a few friends. Gay McMichael, Phil Hardin and Rusty Wynn were also there. "I walked in, and they were talking," Malloy said, "and all of a sudden they said they were honoring 'Frank Malloy.' I about fell on the floor. I was surprised, to say the least."

The group had concocted the whole evening. McMichael, Hardin and Wynn just happen to be part of The Honors tournament committee. The Honors, which is played at Healy Point Country Club, has honored someone in Middle Georgia for contributions to golf the past 16 years, and this year Malloy is their man. "You have earned the respect of your peers, and we can assure you, you are held in the highest esteem among local golfers," the selection committee said in congratulating Malloy on the honor.

Last year Bobby Hicks was honored. Past honorees include Roy Jarvis, Jim Hickman, Ray Cutright, Ed Grisamore and Ken Gerdes. Malloy will be honored with a dinner Friday, and during the next weekend, he'll participate in the two-day amateur four-ball tournament. This award takes Malloy back to his roots. For the past 19 years, Malloy has been the main news anchor at 13 WMAZ. But sports is what brought Malloy to Macon in 1982. A native of Pennsylvania, Malloy came south to study journalism at Georgia. After two-and-a-half years in Columbus, Malloy came to WMAZ as the sports director. And for 11 years, "Biff" Malloy gave us the sports every night at 6 and 11 p.m..

He even still does the sports occasionally, and we still see Malloy on Friday nights during the fall (after that other show in town is on) gives us high school football scores. While he's respected as the dominant news anchor in the market, sports is still a big part of what identifies Frank Malloy.

"Golf was kind of the one thing I really missed

SEE SHANKS, 4B

THE GAME CONTINUES... The 50s. Pages 6-7B.



JASON VORHEES/jvorhees@macon.com

Warner Robins West all-star Leyton Pinckney (11) is congratulated by coach Randy Dempsey after his third home run during the West's District 5 championship win over the Warner Robins East all-stars on Saturday.

Winner's day at the park

Warner Robins West team wins district tournament behind no-hitter

By ANGELA WOOLEN
awoolen@macon.com

WARNER ROBINS — Kody Winner pitched a no-hitter for the Warner Robins American Little League West team against Warner Robins East on Saturday in a 19-0 victory in the District 5 championship.

Winner recorded five strikeouts and walked one in the four-inning game. Leyton Pinckney keyed the offensive outburst with nine RBI. He was 4-for-4 with a double and three home runs.

Even through the West jumped to a 4-0 lead after the first inning, manager Martin Pinckney didn't relax.

"They scored 20 runs (Friday) night, so we knew they could explode at any moment," he said.

The West scored in the first on two two-run home runs, one by Leyton Pinckney and one by Jackson Will.

In the top of the second, the East couldn't get a desperately needed final out as the West scored 11 runs with two outs.

Leyton Pinckney added his double and a three-run home run in the inning. Winner, Chase Padgett, Justin Jones and Reggie Ling all added RBI. Logan Morris was the starting pitcher for the East, and Darius Clarrington came in after Pinckney's homer.

After two innings, the West led 17-0.

Trevor Bruno came in to pitch in the third for the East and gave up another homer to Pinckney.

Dillon Toms, who was on last year's Little League Southeastern Cham-

pionship team with Morris, came in to pitch after catching the whole game the previous night. Toms gave up two hits but made a diving catch on a Tyler Mayfield pop up to end the top of the fourth.

Toms also got the walk in the bottom of the fourth to end Winner's bid for a perfect game.

"The score is not indicative of how good we are," East manager Jason Ring said. "It's a tough loss."

West leadoff batter Padgett was

SEE WINNER, 4B

Hodge moves in front at Houston amateur

By BRANDON WEBB
sports@macon.com

WARNER ROBINS — Ken Crick was confident standing on the tee at Landings Golf Club's 12th hole Saturday during the first round of the Houston County Amateur.

Crick had steadily cobbled together a 1-under score and led playing partner, and tournament favorite, Shawn Hodge by two strokes.

The fickle nature of the game, however, was about to reveal itself to the leader.

Hodge, the tournament's defending champion, bird-

ied the par-313th hole. Crick then double-bogeyed No. 14 and limped home to a 3-over 75.

Hodge parred his way into the clubhouse to post an even-par 72 and holds a three-stroke advantage entering the final round. Hodge struggled off the tee but scrambled well.

"Give him credit," said Crick, who collected four birdies on the day. "I had him for a while. But he was able to get up and down all day. Even when he chipped it poorly, it seemed like he'd

SEE HOUSTON, 4B



JOHN BAZEMORE/Associated Press

Atlanta's Jason Heyward follows through with an RBI single in the eighth inning Saturday.

Braves stretch winning streak

By GEORGE HENRY
Associated Press

ATLANTA — Jason Heyward and the Atlanta Braves were patiently waiting to see if the New York Mets' bullpen would crack.

In the eighth inning, the Braves got their wish.

"Everybody's mind was mentally tough," Heyward said. "Just hanging in there. Not trying to do too much at the plate, just trying to do whatever we could to prolong the inning, prolong

Braves 8,
Mets 7

Next: vs. Mets, 1:35 p.m., Sunday (Fox Sports South)



ALSO

■ Braves acquire minor league shortstop from Reds, 4B

SEE BRAVES, 4B



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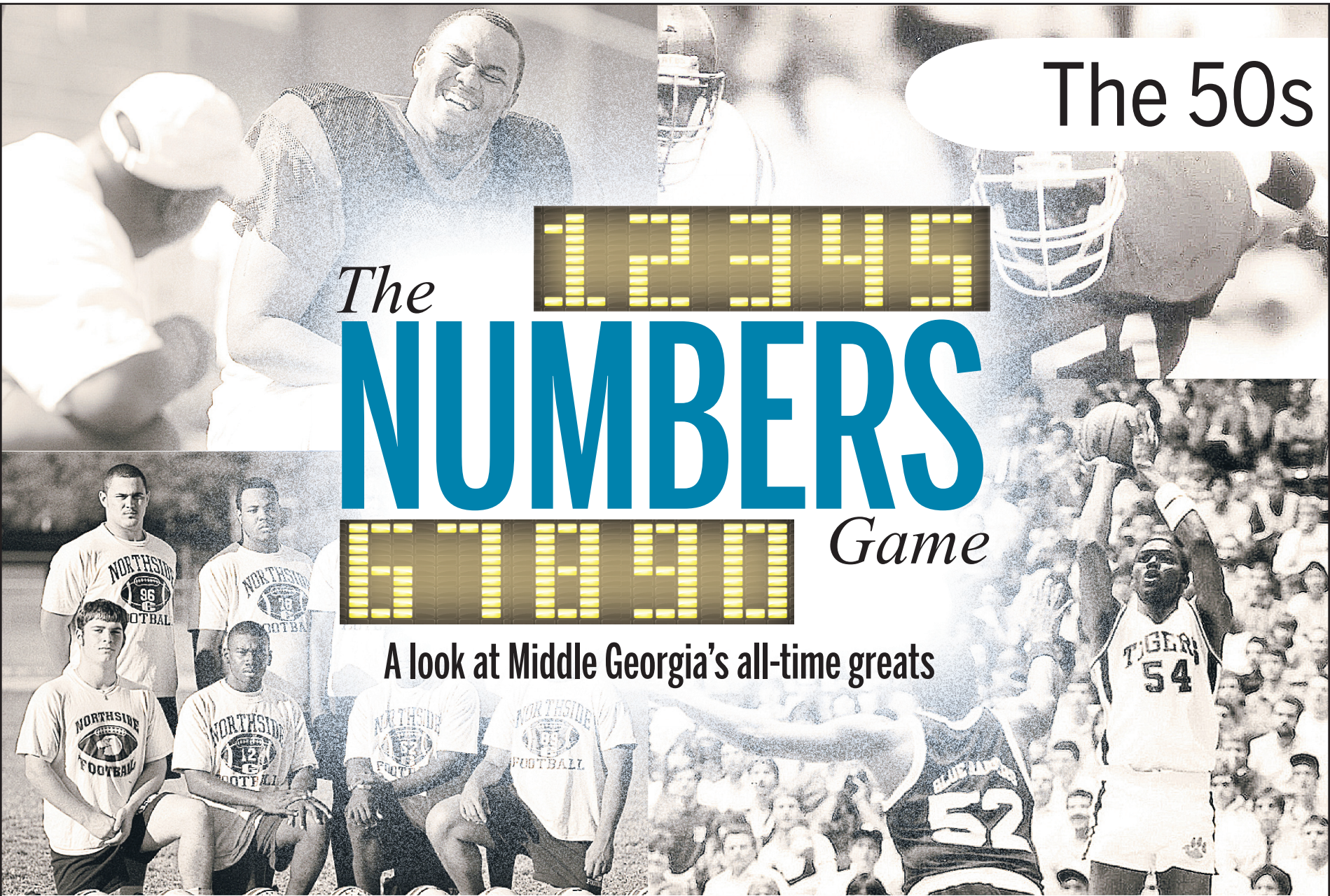


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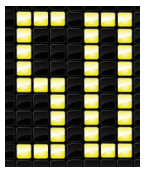
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A look at Middle Georgia's all-time greats



Tank Lawrence, Lanier, football

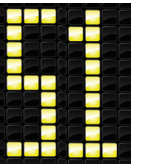
Bio: Lawrence had a stellar high school career, making all-state and All-Southern teams. He started on Lanier's 1948 state championship team, the last state football title for a Bibb County school until Central won its title in

1975. Lawrence played college football at Duke, earning three letters. He was named to the All-Southern Conference team in 1951. He played in the Senior Bowl and the North-South Game before being drafted by the Chicago Bears in 1953. He was inducted into the Macon Sports Hall of Fame in 2007.

Why we picked him: The Numbers Game could be littered with football players from Lanier who won statewide praise before heading to play college ball. But by most estimations, Lawrence was one of the greatest of the greats for the Poets.

Others to consider
Cliff Hutto, Northside, basketball: One of the best basketball players in Houston County history, Hutto led the Eagles teams of the mid-to-late 1960s.

Russ Tanner, Johnson County, football: Tanner is one of the few players in Middle Georgia history to make three all-state teams. Tanner earned four letters at Georgia and eventually started at center for three seasons for the Bulldogs. His jersey joins Herschel Walker's as the only two retired at Johnson County.

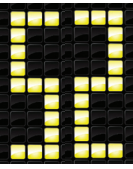


Travis Jones, Wilkinson County, football

Bio: Jones dominated as a high school senior at Wilkinson County, racking up 142 tackles to earn All-Middle Georgia and all-state honors in 1989. Jones went to Georgia and earned four letters. He started on the defensive line as a senior. He played for the Baltimore Stallions in 1995 when the team became the only American squad to win the Canadian Football League's Grey Cup. Following his playing career, Jones coached at Georgia, Appalachian State, Kansas, LSU and with the Miami Dolphins. Jones has been a defensive line coach with the New Orleans Saints since 2008.

Why we picked him: Jones is one of the greatest football

players from Wilkinson County. Few players had more productive high school careers on defense in the 1980s.



Terry Fair, Southwest, basketball

Bio: Fair was often to go-to player for the 1979 Southwest basketball team, which won both the state title and a mythical national championship. Fair didn't lead the team in scoring, but he was a dominant defender and a tremendous a finisher on offense. He averaged 21 points and 15 rebounds as a senior. Fair was The Telegraph's Player of the Year, and he became the second Middle Georgian ever — after Al Wood — to play in the McDonald's All-American Game. Fair went to Georgia, where he started all four years. Fair averaged 13.7 points to help lead Georgia to the Final Four in 1983.

Why we picked him: It's hard not to pick the best player on the best team in the history of Georgia high school basketball. Fair was dominant in high school and then averaged



Terry Fair (52) averaged 21 points and 15 rebounds for Southwest's state championship team in 1979.

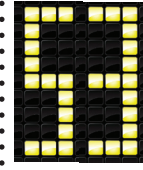
more than 10 points per game in three of his four years at Georgia, and he helped lead the Bulldogs to a Final Four.

Others to consider
Vivian Dixon, Warner Robins, basketball: Dixon was one of the most dominant girls basketball players in Middle Georgia history. As a senior in 1964, she scored

more than 70 points in a game twice, and she averaged nearly 40 points per game.

Greg Lloyd, Peach County, football: Lloyd peaked later in his career, moving from a solid but not spectacular career at Peach County to a great stint at Fort Valley State. He made multiple All-SIAC teams. He became an elite linebacker for the Pittsburgh Steelers, making five Pro Bowls and three AP All-Pro teams. Lloyd was the UPI's AFC Defensive Player of the Year in 1994. He made the Steelers' 75th Anniversary Team. He was more well-known for the No. 95 he wore in Pittsburgh.

Ronnie Rogers, Dublin, football: Rogers was the GHSA Class AA Lineman of the Year and The Telegraph All-Middle Georgia Player of the Year in 1965. He earned three letters at Georgia, starting at nose guard as a senior in 1970.



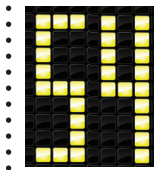
Dave Taylor, Central, football

Bio: Taylor first garnered attention as a place-kicker for the Chargers. He earned all-state honors in 1972 as a place-kicker. But he also starred on the offensive line. He was named The Telegraph's Co-Lineman of the Year alongside teammate Mack Guest in 1974. Taylor signed with Georgia, but he later played at BYU, where he lettered in 1975 and 1976.

Why we picked him: Taylor was one of the early greats for the then-young Central football program. Few players in Middle

Georgia history are as versatile as Taylor, and perhaps none received All-Middle Georgia honors as a kicker and as an offensive lineman.

Others to consider
Terron Pullen, Johnson County, football: Pullen was named the Class A defensive player of the year in 2001 before signing with Georgia Tech.



Horace Grant, Hancock Central, basketball

Bio: Grant went from high school to Clemson, where he blossomed into a star. Grant was named ACC Player of the Year in 1987 a few months before being selected by the Chicago Bulls with the 10th overall selection in the NBA draft. Grant won four NBA championships, the first three coming with Michael Jordan and the Bulls from 1991-93. He later won his fourth title playing alongside Kobe Bryant and Shaquille O'Neal with the Los Angeles Lakers in 2001. Grant made one NBA all-star team (1994) and landed on the NBA All-Defensive second team four times.

Why we picked him: While there were some great high school players who wore No. 54, Grant gets the nod because he is indelibly linked with No. 54. He wore the number from his high school playing days to Clemson and then to all five different NBA teams he played for. Rarely does a player keep the same number that long.

Others to consider
Steve Grayer, Southwest, basketball: Grayer won the Atlanta Tipoff Club's Mr. Georgia Basketball in 1984. Grayer played college ball at Wichita State, where he made the Missouri Valley Conference's all-conference team in 1988-89.

Kerry Hammonds, Northeast, basketball: Hammonds was the first player to earn back-to-back All-Middle Georgia Player of the Year honors when he accomplished the feat in the early 1980s. He went on to have an outstanding college career at Middle Tennessee State, leading the Ohio Valley Conference in rebounding in 1988-89.

Audra Smith, Baldwin, basketball: One of the great girls basketball players in Middle Georgia history, Smith won three state titles with the Bravettes. She was named Miss Georgia Basketball as a senior in 1988. Smith played in three Final Fours as a player at Virginia. She later coached at her alma mater before taking over her current position as head women's basketball coach at UAB.

SEE NUMBERS, 7B



Hancock Central's Horace Grant, right, won four NBA titles in a long professional career that saw him play for five NBA teams.

GARY BOGDON/
Orlando Sentinel



Before starting at Georgia Tech, Kammeon Holsey (24) averaged 27 points per game as a senior and led Hancock Central to the GHSA Class A championship.

Coming up in The Numbers Game

The Numbers Game continues throughout the summer:

- July 22: The 40s
- July 29: The 30s
- Aug. 5: The 20s
- Aug. 12: The 10s
- Aug. 19: Single digits

macon.com
ONLINE

To see even more athletes we considered, go to Jonathan Heeter's blog at macon.com/heetsblog.

NUMBERS FROM 6B

44 Kammeon Holsey, Hancock Central, basketball

Bio: Holsey served as Hancock Central's team captain for three years and led the Bulldogs to their first state basketball championship in 2008. He averaged 27 points and 10 rebounds and was named the AP Class A player of the year. Holsey has started 43 games — including all 31 in 2011-12 — in two seasons at Georgia Tech. He averaged 9.4 points per game as a sophomore.

Why we picked him: Holsey essentially threw the Bulldogs on his back en route to the 2008 state championship. He did something neither Horace nor Harvey Grant could accomplish — bringing a state title to Sparta.

Others to consider

Kaye Foskey, Northside, basketball: Foskey made an incredible 202 of her 259 field goal attempts (78 percent) in 1967 to lead Northside to the state championship. She averaged 25.7 points per game.

Ralph Torrance, Lanier, football: Torrance earned all-state honors after helping lead the Poets to the 1950 state championship game, where they lost to Decatur.

Jeffrey Whitaker, Warner Robins, football: Whitaker played in the U.S. Army All-American game as a senior a few months after he helped snap Warner Robins' four-game losing streak to Northside. He played as a true freshman for Auburn in the BCS national championship game win over Oregon in 2011. Whitaker is



Wilkinson County's Travis Jones had 142 tackles as a senior in 1989. He went on to play for Georgia before entering the Canadian Football League during its U.S. expansion era.

projected to start for Auburn as a junior defensive tackle in 2012.

51 Josh Weldon, Crisp County, football

Bio: Weldon led a Crisp County team that went 21-5 from 1995-96. The Cougars lost in the

1995 state semifinals to Cedar Shoals in overtime at the Georgia Dome, but Weldon earned all-state honors. He received the same recognition after his senior season in 1996. Weldon went on to earn three letters at Auburn.

Why we picked him: Weldon was one of the key players of two of the best teams in Crisp County history. That was apparent with Meiko Collier and Whit Smith joining Weldon at Auburn. Of the

three, Weldon was the only to make two all-state teams.

59 Torrey Howard, Northside, football

Bio: Like our pick at No. 58, Howard helped Northside's emergence during Conrad Nix's second stint leading the Eagles. The Eagles went 25-2 during Howard's final two seasons in 1998 and 1999. Howard then went to Valdosta State, where he was named to three consecutive Gulf South All-Conference teams from 2002-04. Howard earned All-America honors as a senior in 2004 after helping lead the Blazers to the Division II national championship.

Why we picked him: Howard may not have the same name recognition as some of his other Northside contemporaries like Chansi Stuckey, Dantonio Burnette, Jason Respert, Kenny Parker or Anthony Sessions. But his collegiate career measures up to any of them.

58 Kenny Parker, Northside, football

Bio: Parker earned all-state and USA Today All-America honors as a senior in 1999. Parker played in 29 games — starting nine — in his college career at Florida. Parker coached at Florida and Murray State before landing his current job as assistant strength and conditioning coach at Ohio State.

Why we picked him: Parker's final two seasons at Northside

became the two best in school history to that point. The Eagles went 12-1 and lost to McEachern in the quarterfinals in 1998, and they went 13-1 and lost to Lowndes in the semifinals in 1999.

Others to consider

Tony Berryhill, R.E. Lee, football: Berryhill started two years at Clemson, including on the Tigers' national championship team in 1981. He was drafted by the Baltimore Colts in 1982 and later became a charter member of the Thomaston-Upson Sports Hall of Fame.

Jerome Bibbins, Northside, football: Bibbins made all-state teams in 2006 and 2007 as he anchored an offensive line that won consecutive state titles. Bibbins signed with Georgia Southern.

59 Willie McGaughey, Lanier, football

Bio: McGaughey earned all-state and All-Southern honors as a senior in 1956. He was also selected as Lanier's MVP as a senior. McGaughey lettered three seasons at Georgia Tech, earning the honor of team captain as a senior in 1961. He started at center his final two years at Tech.

Why we picked him: Lanier had an impressive string of All-Southern selections, and McGaughey continued that string. McGaughey's leadership helped the Poets to a 9-1-1 senior season in 1956 and a spot in the state semifinals.

Others to consider

Glen Peacock, Dooly County, football: Peacock followed up a stellar high school career by heading to South Carolina in 1982.

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LOCAL GOLF, 10C

The Honors Championship gets started with the first round at Healy Point Country Club.



Bill Shanks

Football season can't get here soon enough

There's something about the preseason. It's that environment of anticipation that makes you feel like a kid in early December, and you just can't wait for Santa Claus.

Since I'm a baseball fan, there's nothing like spring training. Every team is undefeated. There's hope for an improved season, regardless of how well your team the previous season. And even the lead up to the start of spring training is a lot of fun. There's nothing like counting down until the day pitchers and catchers report to Florida to begin the long baseball season.

And for football, we're in that similar spot in the calendar. We're about a week away from some teams strapping on the helmets and pads and hitting each other. We're getting close to hearing about which players are looking good, which ones need to step up and how good or bad our favorite teams might be this season.

SEC Media Days this past week was all I needed to get excited about the upcoming season. Hearing what the coaches believe will be the strengths and weaknesses of their teams and just hearing football talk was enough to get my blood pumping to know we are really getting close.

But it's also enough to start making me really nervous. All of the talk from Georgia head coach Mark Richt about the offense raised enough questions for any Bulldog fan to start shaking their head. With offensive lineman Kolton Houston again a question mark, can true freshman John Theus step in as the starting right tackle? And we all know with Isaiah Crowell now gone someone's has to step up and become the new starting running back.

Georgia Tech fans are probably sweating it out, wondering who will replace Macon's Julian Burnett at line-backer. And Georgia Southern fans can't wait to find out how head coach Jeff Monken will replace quarterback Jaybo Shaw.

It's the normal preseason issues that make fans just take a few deep breaths.

SEE SHANKS, 10C

Sheets has second straight strong outing

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Ben Sheets is giving the Atlanta Braves an unexpected lift in the pennant race. Then again, it's not that surprising. The four-time All-Star has turned in stellar outings before.

Sheets pitched six shutout innings, Brian McCann and Chipper Jones homered and the Atlanta Braves beat the Washington Nationals 4-0 on Saturday in the opening game of a

day-night doubleheader.

Outdueling Nationals starter Edwin Jackson, Sheets (2-0) extended his scoreless innings streak to 12 in his return after missing last season because of Tommy John surgery on his right elbow. The victory pushed the Braves' winning streak to three and moved them within 1½ games of the NL East-leading Nationals.

"It's been a huge pickup for us," McCann said of adding Sheets to the Braves' rotation. "To come out here for his two

starts and pitch the way he has. Hasn't given up a run, he's pounding the zone and the more you're around him the more you know why he's so successful. He's a competitor, he knows what he's doing."

The Nationals have lost three straight, including the series opener Friday night, blowing a 9-0 lead before falling 11-10 in 11 innings.

Washington removed Bryce Harper from the game after two innings with a left ankle bruise.

The 19-year-old fouled a bunt off his left ankle. X-Rays were negative and the rookie outfielder played in the second game, a 5-2 Nationals win.

"(Bryce) was down hitting, trying to swing with it, and Michael Morse and LaRoche saw him and said he can't even swing. So, that's why I took him out," Johnson said. "Just a bruise, he'll be fine."

Braves 4-2, Nationals 0-5

Next: at Nationals, 1:35 p.m., Sunday (Fox Sports South)



SEE BRAVES, 10C

“We hand it off to Herschel ...

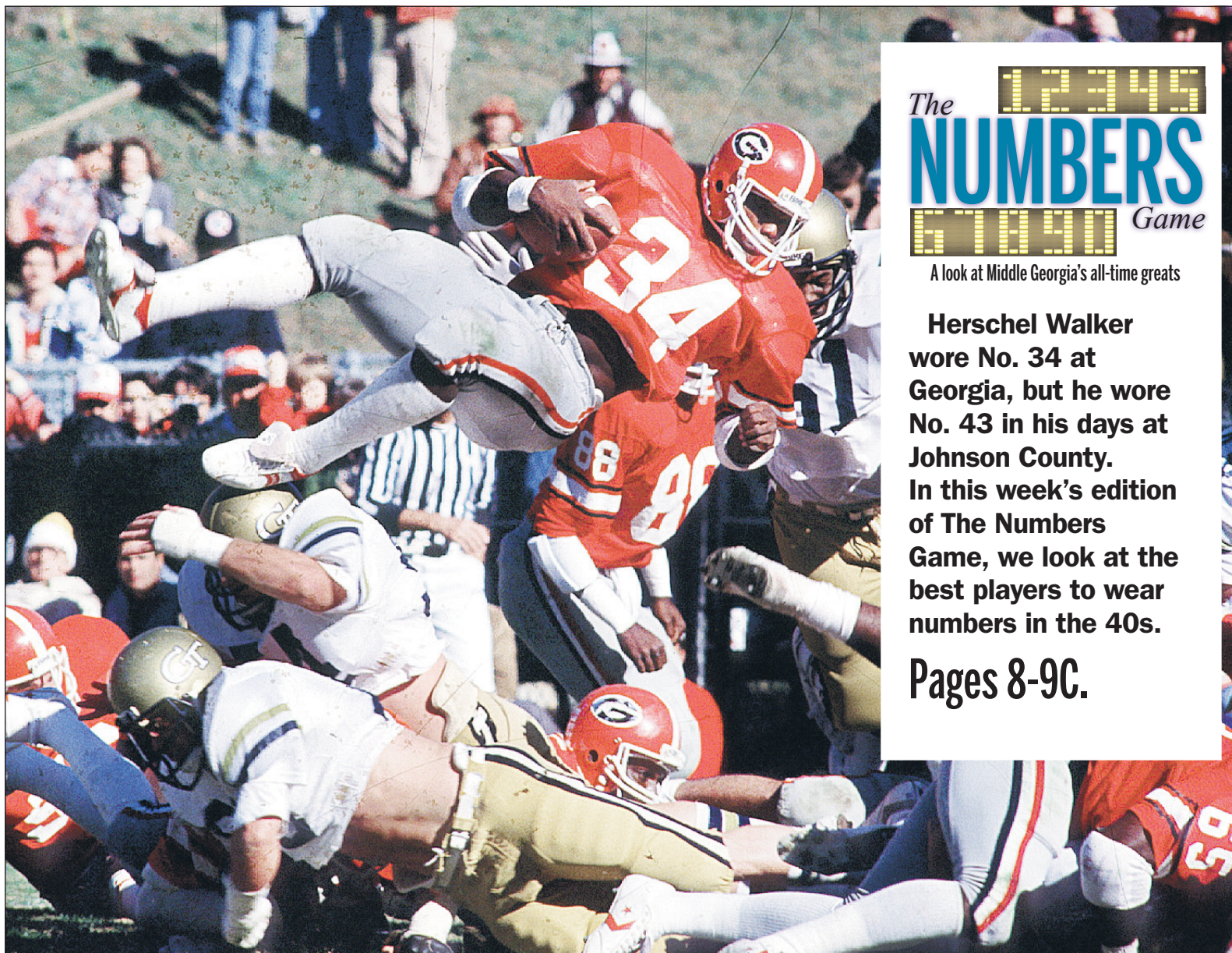
There's a hole. ... 5 ... 10 ... 12, he's running over people.

Oh, you Herschel Walker!

My God almighty, he ran right through two men. Herschel ran right over two men. They had him dead away inside the 9. Herschel Walker went 16 yards. He drove right over orange shirts, just driving and running with those big thighs.

My God, a freshman!”

— Larry Munson, during Georgia's 1980 game against Tennessee



The **NUMBERS** Game
A look at Middle Georgia's all-time greats

Herschel Walker wore No. 34 at Georgia, but he wore No. 43 in his days at Johnson County. In this week's edition of **The Numbers Game**, we look at the best players to wear numbers in the 40s.

Pages 8-9C.

Telegraph File Photo

Scott in control entering British Open's final round

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
AP Golf Writer

LYTHAM ST. ANNES, England — Adam Scott never has had a better chance to end that long wait for a major championship — mostly because of his long putter.

Scott stayed in the game early with two key par saves, pulled

away with three birdies around the turn and was solid at the end Saturday for a 2-under-par 68 that gave him a four-shot lead going into the final round at Royal Lytham & St. Annes.

"It was all pretty solid stuff, considering the circumstances and how

much trouble there is on this golf course," Scott said.

The golf course, even without wind for three days, swallowed up Brandt Snedeker during a 10-hole stretch in the middle of the round and nearly knocked him out of contention.

This is the fourth time in the past nine majors that someone took at

least a four-shot lead into the final round. The only player who failed to win was Rory McIlroy at the Masters in 2011.

Scott narrowly missed a 20-foot birdie putt on the final hole that would have given him a share of the 54-hole Open scoring record.

SEE BRITISH, 10C

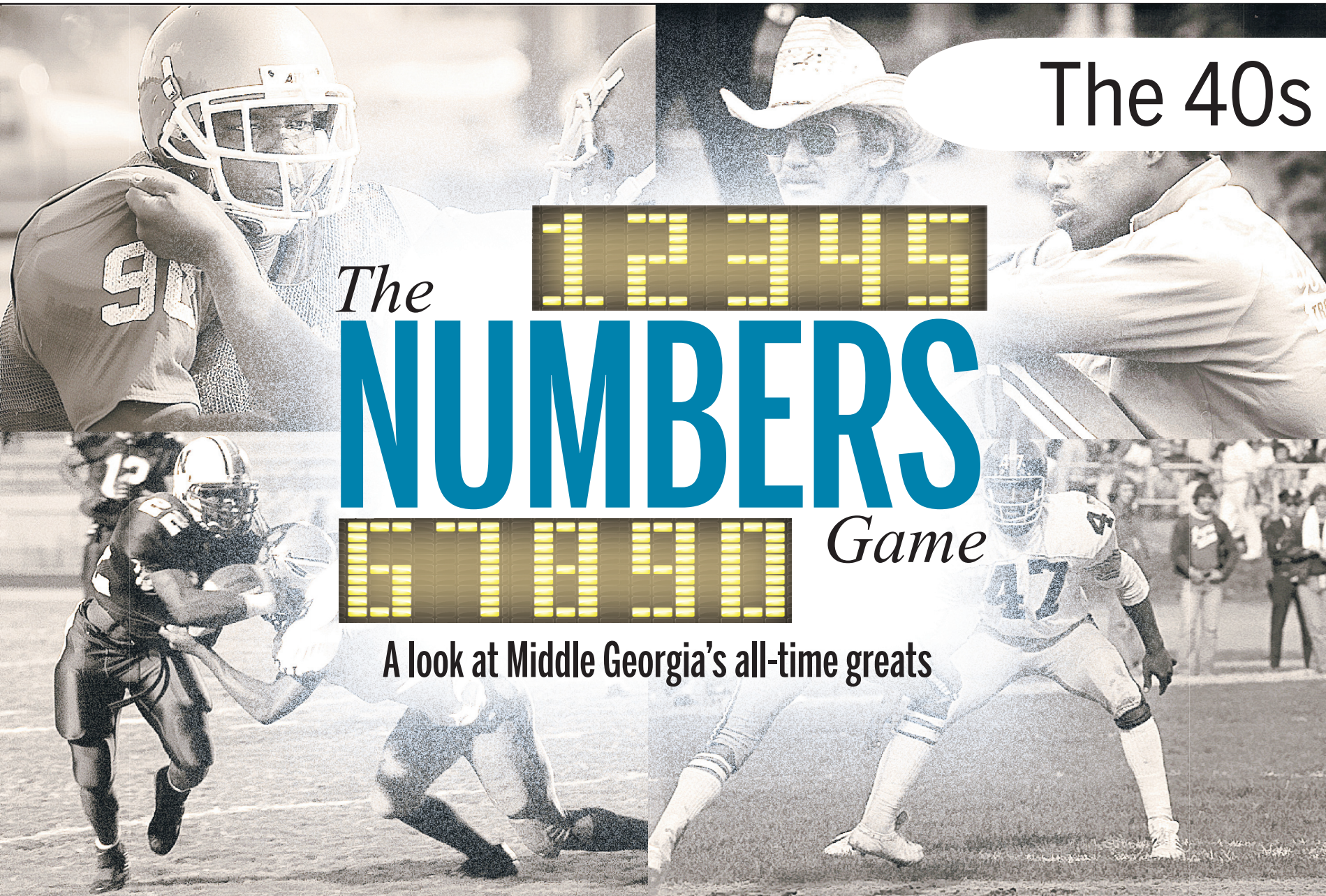
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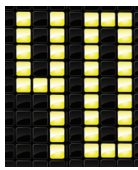
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A look at Middle Georgia's all-time greats



Julian Burnett, Westside, football



Go to macon.com for more photos of the players who were chosen, as well as Jonathan Heeter's podcast.

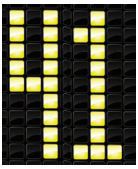
Bio: Burnett made two all-state teams at Westside and was named The Telegraph's All-Middle Georgia Player of the Year and the AP Class AAAA Defensive Player of the Year in 2008. Burnett led Westside to an undefeated regular season, the first in Bibb County since integration. The Seminoles' defense didn't allow more than seven points in its first 11 games, and it only allowed an average of six points per game for the season. Burnett helped Georgia Tech win an ACC championship in 2009. He led the Yellow Jackets in tackles in both his sophomore and junior seasons before suffering a serious injury in the Sun Bowl on Dec. 31. Burnett was a team captain as a junior, and he earned second-team All-ACC honors. He has 250 career tackles.

Why we picked him: Burnett had one of the most dominant careers for a Bibb County player since integration. He led a defense that had one of the best seasons in county history. The Seminoles lost to eventual champion Tucker in the quarterfinals, but the loss didn't slow down the postseason accolades.

Others to consider

Sammy Brown, Warner Robins, football: Brown was a junior on Warner Robins' mythical national championship team in 1976. He later started two seasons at Georgia Tech before spending time in the USFL.

Joe DeFore, Lanier, football: DeFore made the all-state team in 1951 and was an All-Southern team honorable mention selection. He lettered two years at South Carolina.



John Mathews, Crawford County, basketball

Bio: The first prominent high school athlete in Crawford County history led the Eagles to deep runs in the state playoffs in 1959 and 1960. They advanced to the semifinals in 1959 and then went one step further a year later, losing by one point in overtime to Edison in the championship game at the Macon City Auditorium.

Mathews lettered three seasons at Georgia.

Why we picked him: Mathews served as the leader on the floor for legendary Crawford County head coach J.B. Hawkins. Those Mathews teams helped Hawkins carve out his own respected legacy alongside the powerful programs at Fort Valley and Perry. The early success helped pave the way for Crawford County's first state title in 1969.

Others to consider

Jimmy Intorcchia, Tattnall Square, football: Intorcchia rolled to an impressive senior season to help the Trojans win a GISA title. He broke school records for single-game (326 yards) and single-season (2,186 yards) rushing. He finished with 3,804 career rushing yards.

Roger Jackson, Central, football: Jackson helped lead the Chargers' no-name defense to the 1975 state championship. He played at Bethune-Cookman before playing 53 games in five seasons for the Denver Broncos beginning in 1982.

Camille Lowe, Stratford, basketball: Lowe earned all-state honors at Stratford before heading to Georgia. Lowe started four years for the Lady Bulldogs, making the All-SEC first-team in 1991 and the All-SEC second team in 1993. Lowe finished her career ninth in all-time scoring, and she was named an SEC Legend in 2012.

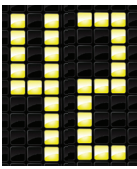
Catherine Rader, FPD, basketball: Rader scored 1,455 career points and remains the school record holder in blocked



Telegraph File Photo

Before he claimed ownership of No. 34 at Georgia, Herschel Walker wore No. 43 at Johnson County.

shots. She led the Vikings to the 1991 GISA title being heading off to play at Wofford.



Charles Johnson, Hawkinsville, football

Bio: Johnson was named the AP Class A Defensive Player of the Year after leading Hawkinsville to an undefeated state championship season in 2003. He finished with 16 sacks as a senior. Johnson played in 35 games at Georgia, starting 13. He finished his college

career with 14.5 sacks and 29.5 tackles for loss, earning second-team All-SEC honors from the AP in 2006. Johnson was a third-round pick of the Carolina Panthers in 2007. He has played his entire pro career with the Panthers, picking up 30.5 career sacks. He led the Panthers in sacks in 2010 and 2011. Johnson signed a six-year contract with the Panthers prior to the 2011 season.

Why we picked him: It would be tough to find a bigger mismatch on a Class A team than Johnson. He towered over almost all of his opponents and displayed an athleticism that allowed him to play wide receiver. Johnson started only one of his three seasons at Georgia, but he's making up for that by becoming one of the best pass rushers in the NFC South.

Others to consider

Tommy Hart, Ballard-Hudson, football: Hart followed a standout college career at Morris Brown by playing 13 years (1968-80) in the NFL. He played his first 10 seasons for the San Francisco 49ers, earning a Pro Bowl selection in 1976 after collecting 16 sacks. Hart served as an assistant coach on three 49ers Super Bowl champion teams.

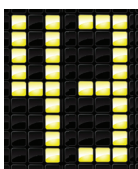
Corico Wright, Baldwin, football: Wright, formerly known as Corico Hawkins, made consecutive all-state and All-Middle Georgia teams in 2007 and 2008. He now plays at Clemson, where he has made 141 tackles in 2011. He has 229 career tackles for the Tigers heading into his senior season.

Chimere Jordan, Jones County, basketball: The Telegraph's two-time All-Middle Georgia Player of the Year helped lead the Lady Hounds to back-to-back state semifinals appearances in 2005 and 2006. She later played at Gulf

Coast Community College and Georgia College, where she broke the single-season scoring record in her first season on campus.

Greg Minor, Washington County, basketball: Minor averaged 12.6 points per game in three seasons at Louisville. The Los Angeles Clippers selected Minor with the 25th overall pick of the first round during the 1994 NBA draft. Minor was traded to the Boston Celtics before ever playing a game for the Clippers, and he spent his entire five-year NBA career with the Celtics.

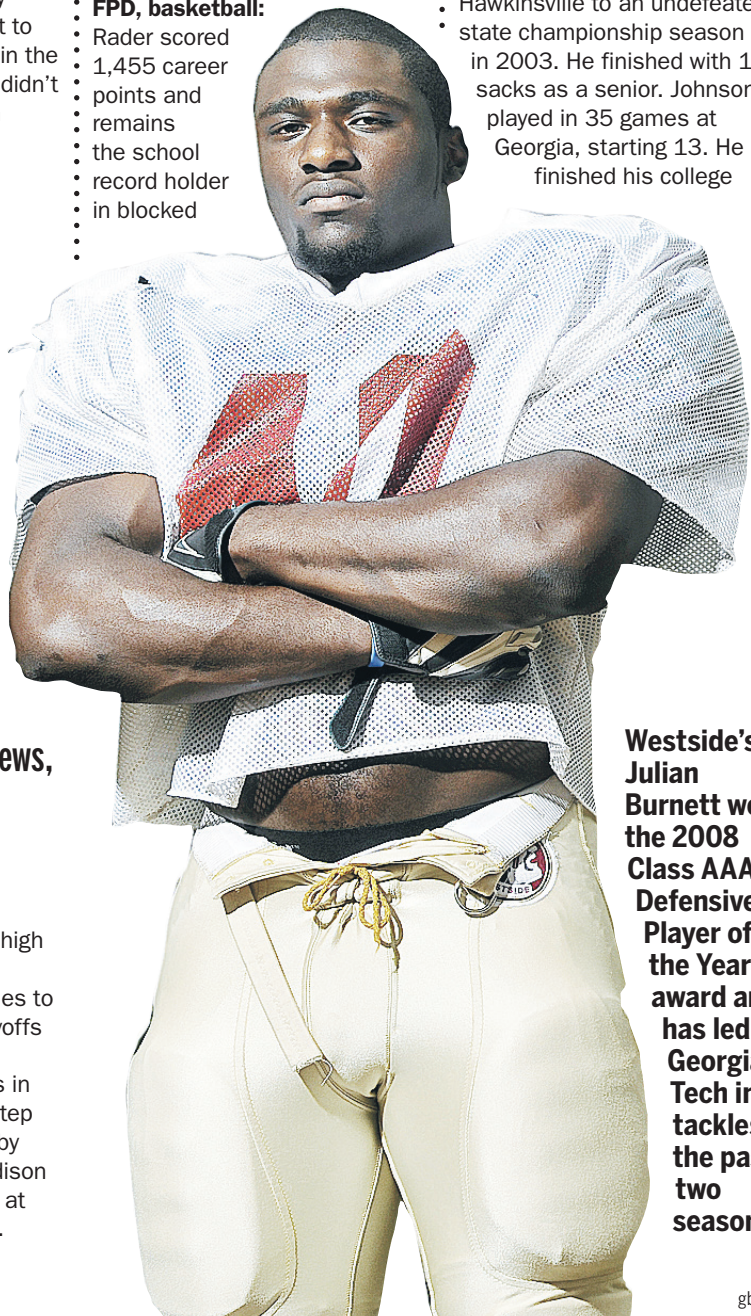
Malcolm Thomas, Baldwin, basketball: Thomas helped lead Baldwin to the state championship in 1981 before heading to Moberly Junior College, where he was named outstanding player of the national junior college tournament in 1983. Thomas then went to Missouri, where he lettered two seasons and finished his Missouri career averaging 17 points per game. He led the Tigers in scoring both seasons and earned All-Big-8 Conference honors in 1985. The Los Angeles Clippers selected Thomas in the 1985 NBA draft.



Herschel Walker, Johnson County, football

Bio: Walker led Johnson County to a 14-1 record and a state championship in 1979. He was named The Telegraph's Player of the Year in 1979 and its athlete of the year in 1980. He rushed for 3,167 yards and 45 touchdowns in 1979. The single-season yardage total remained a state record for 21 years, while his touchdown record held up for 24 years. He rushed for 6,137 yards and 86 touchdowns in his high school career. He won the Dial Award as the nation's top high school athlete. Walker headed to Georgia, where he led the Bulldogs to a national championship as a freshman in 1980. He became the only player in NFL history to finish in the top three of Heisman voting in all of his college seasons. He won the Heisman Trophy in 1983 and made three All-America teams. He rushed for 5,259 yards and 49 touchdowns at Georgia. He won two rushing titles in three years in the USFL, rushing for 2,411 yards and 21 touchdown for the New Jersey Generals in 1985. Walker played in the NFL for 12 seasons, making two Pro Bowl teams. He led the NFL in all-purpose yards in 1987 and 1990. He rushed for 1,000 yards twice, with a career-best 1,514 yards with the Dallas

SEE NUMBERS, 8C



Westside's Julian Burnett won the 2008 Class AAAA Defensive Player of the Year award and has led Georgia Tech in tackles the past two seasons.



Telegraph File

Charles Johnson (42) was a standout at Hawkinsville before moving on to Georgia and then the Carolina Panthers in the NFL.

NUMBERS FROM 8C

Cowboys in 1988.

Why we picked him: Walker is the most highly regarded football player (and perhaps athlete) in Middle Georgia history. Even though two-time gold medalist Roger Kingdom wore No. 43, this was a no-brainer.

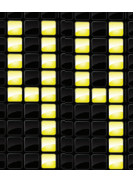
Others to consider

Roger Kingdom, Vienna, football: Kingdom earned all-state honors at running back in 1980 before being named The Telegraph Athlete of the Year in 1981. Kingdom, of course, was known for his track career during which he won gold medals in the 110-meter hurdles at the 1984 and 1988 Summer Olympics. He also won a NCAA hurdles championship at Pittsburgh. He held the 110-hurdles world record for four years, and he is one of only two athletes to win consecutive Olympic gold medals in the 110-meter hurdles.

Ben Snipes, Dublin, football: Snipes was named lineman of the year for Class A in 1960 after helping lead the Irish to the state title.

Elmore Smith, Ballard-Hudson, basketball: Smith really hit his stride at Kentucky State, allowing the 7-footer to be picked third overall in the 1971 NBA draft. He played eight seasons in the NBA (Buffalo, Los Angeles, Milwaukee and Cleveland). Smith finished his career averaging a double-double in points and rebounds. Smith is in the Macon Sports Hall of Fame.

Mike Wilson, FPD, football: Wilson scored 33 career touchdowns to go along with 19 career interceptions during an all-state prep career that ended in 1980. Wilson then played at Georgia.



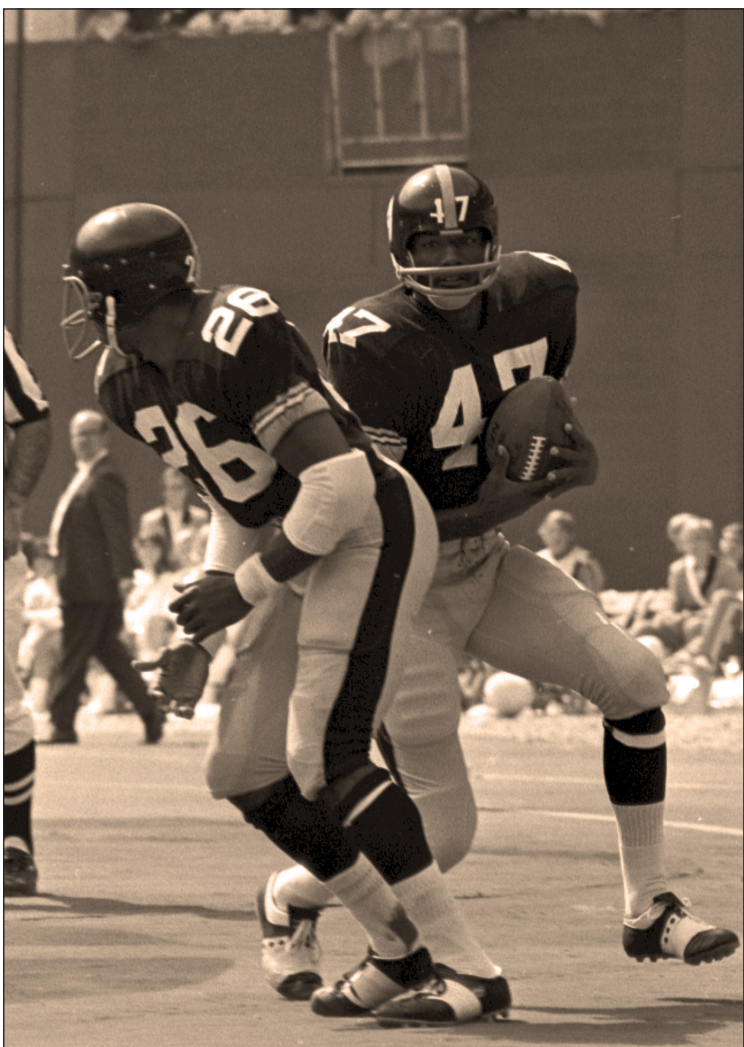
Alvin Toles, Mary Persons, football

Bio: Toles rushed for 1,663 yards to lead Mary Persons to an undefeated season in 1980 and the school's only state championship. Toles earned all-state honors and was named The Telegraph's All-Middle Georgia Player of the Year. He earned four letters at Tennessee, becoming a full-time starter at inside linebacker in 1983 and playing on the same defense with future NFL Hall of Famer Reggie White. The New Orleans Saints selected Toles with the 24th pick of the first round in the 1985 NFL draft. He played 55 games for the Saints during his four-year NFL career, starting 17.

Why we picked him: Toles might be the most prominent player in Mary Persons history. He was the only all-state pick off the Bulldogs' lone state championship team. On top of that already impressive legacy, he became a productive college player and an eventual first-round draft pick.

Others to consider

Steve Boswell, Warner Robins, football: Boswell capped a remarkable high school career by leading Warner Robins to a state championship and mythical national title in 1981. He was named Lineman of the Year



Pittsburgh Steelers

Before he became a Hall of Famer with the Pittsburgh Steelers, Mel Blount played multiple sports at Lyons Industrial just prior to desegregation.

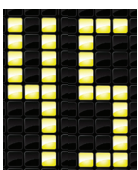
following the season. Boswell started at linebacker for two seasons at Georgia in 1985 and 1986.

Antonio Cochran, Macon County, football: Cochran made all-state teams as a junior and senior in 1992 and 1993 before heading to Georgia, where he earned two letters.

Harvey Grant, Hancock Central, basketball: Grant played at Clemson, and later Oklahoma, before embarking on an 11-year NBA career playing for Washington, Portland and Philadelphia. He averaged 18 points or more for three straight seasons beginning in 1990-91.

Ivano Newbill, Southwest, basketball: Newbill was named Mr. Basketball in Georgia as a senior in 1987. He was a standout at Georgia Tech before playing for the Detroit Pistons, Vancouver Grizzlies and Atlanta Hawks.

Kourtny Thomas, Houston County, softball: Thomas helped lead Houston County to 102 wins during her high school career. She was The Telegraph's All-Middle Georgia Player of the Year in 2009, and she made three all-state teams. Thomas played at Tennessee and now Georgia Southern.



Melvin Borum, Hawkinsville, football

Bio: Borum led the Red Devils to back-to-back undefeated seasons and state championships in 1953 and 1954. He rushed for 23 touchdowns as a junior as the Red Devils beat Calhoun 27-6 to win the championship. Borum topped himself with 29 touchdowns as a senior, eventually leading the Red Devils to a 20-6 win over Buford in the

title game. Borum was named the Class C Back of the Year in 1954.

Why we picked him: Borum was probably the greatest Hawkinsville player of the Bobby Gentry era. Few players in Middle Georgia history can equal his scoring proficiency, scoring 52 touchdowns in two seasons.

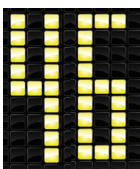
Others to consider

Tennyson Coleman, Dublin, football: Coleman was the key offensive standout on the Dublin state championship teams of 1959 and 1960.

Ron Rogers, Dublin, football: Rogers only played his senior year at Dublin, but he made it count. He finished with 189 tackles and all-state honors.

Dontarrious Thomas, Perry, football: Thomas made the all-state team as a senior in 1998. He went to Auburn, where he would make an All-SEC team in 2003. The Minnesota Vikings selected Thomas in the second round of the 2004 NFL Draft. He played for three teams in six NFL seasons.

Greg Tremble, Warner Robins, football: Tremble helped the Demons win the 1988 state championship as a junior. He later made the all-state team as a senior. Tremble started for two seasons at Georgia, earning All-SEC honors in 1992. He played for the Philadelphia Eagles and the Dallas Cowboys.



Juaquin Feazell, Peach County, football

Bio: Feazell earned all-state honors as a high school senior in 1993, earning Class AAA Defensive Player of the Year honors after helping the Trojans to an 11-2 record. He was an honorable mention all-state pick as a junior after the Trojans

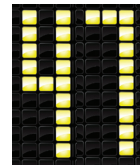
lost to Thomas County Central in the state championship game.

Feazell signed with Michigan, where he lettered for four years. He played on Michigan's 1997 national championship team before serving as a co-captain for the Wolverines a year later. He finished his career with 129 tackles and 10 sacks, according to ESPN.com. Feazell played briefly in the arena league before earning a law degree.

Why we picked him: Feazell was one of the top recruits in the Southeast as a senior at Peach County. He spurned offers from Florida, Georgia and Notre Dame to go to Michigan, and he delivered on his recruiting hype with a solid college career.

Others to consider

Durwood Sauls, Willingham, football: Sauls translated a standout career for Willingham to earning two letters at Auburn.



Mel Blount, Lyons Industrial, football

Bio: Blount played multiple sports at both the segregated high school Lyons Industrial and at Southern University. Blount's play at Southern helped him stand out to the Pittsburgh Steelers, who selected him in the third round of the 1970 NFL draft. An aggressive and physical defensive back who dominated when pass interference rules were less stringent, Blount intercepted 57 passes in his 14-year NFL career — all with the Steelers. He started on all four Steelers Super Bowl championship teams in the 1970s. He made five Pro Bowl teams, four All-Pro teams and was the AP's NFL Defensive Player of the Year in 1975. Blount was inducted in the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1989, making him one of two Middle Georgians enshrined in Canton, Ohio. He also is in the Louisiana and Georgia Sports Halls of Fame.

Why we picked him: Blount is almost certainly one of the best cornerbacks who ever lived. The Sporting News ranked Blount as the 37th best player in NFL history in 1999. Blount's aggressive play led to the NFL adopting stricter pass interference rules. Few players, if any, with Middle Georgia roots can claim the level of championship success at the pro level Blount experienced.

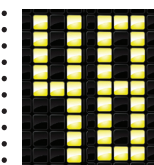
Others to consider

Deshay McKeever, Jeff Davis, football: McKeever made consecutive all-state teams in 1989 and 1990 before heading to Georgia, where he earned four letters.

Jesse Miller, Washington County, football: Miller had one of the most incredible seasons in Georgia high school football history when he rushed for 42 touchdowns as a senior in 1997. He was an even better defensive player, earning two all-state honors on defense. The Golden Hawks went 30-0 during Miller's junior and senior seasons. Miller signed with Georgia.

Kevin Porter, Warner Robins, football: Porter made the AP all-state team in 1983 before

heading to Auburn, where he earned four letters. Porter played six seasons in the NFL, with the first five coming with the Kansas City Chiefs from 1988-92. Porter later coached the Macon Knights from 2001-03 and currently serves as head football coach at Point University.



Leroy Hill, Baldwin, football

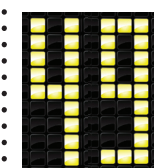
Bio: Hill made an all-state team as a senior in 2000 before heading to Clemson. He led the Tigers' defense in 2003 and 2004, making consecutive All-ACC first teams. The Seattle Seahawks selected Hill in the third round of the 2005 NFL draft. Hill started at outside linebacker as a rookie in the Seahawks loss to the Pittsburgh Steelers in Super Bowl XL. Hill has played his entire career with the Seahawks, starting 77 of 84 career games.

Why we picked him: Baldwin has produced plenty of standout defensive players since 2000, but Hill probably stands on top of that list. He has excelled at every level of football thus far, and he continues to be a mainstay on the Seattle defense after re-signing with the team in April.

Others to consider

Mario Harvey, Mary Persons, football: Harvey's aggressive play at Marshall helped him make All-Conference USA teams as a junior and senior in 2010. The Pittsburgh Steelers signed the linebacker as an undrafted free agent. He currently plays for the Indianapolis Colts.

Henry Sheffield, Dublin, football: Sheffield made back-to-back all-state teams in 1957 and 1958.



Michael Lemon, Stratford, football

Bio: Lemon made two GISA all-state football teams at Stratford, helping the Eagles win the 2004 championship. Lemon went on to play at Georgia, where he played in seven games. He then attended Georgia Military College before heading to N.C. State in 2009. He played in all 12 games for the Wolfpack in 2009, playing a crucial role with late tackles in a win over Maryland, before becoming a starting defensive end as a senior in 2010.

Why we picked him: Lemon was a difference maker for the Eagles in football as well as basketball. Lemon showed tremendous adversity following the tragic murder of his mother and his dismissal at Georgia to finish a productive two seasons at N.C. State. He was nominated for the Rudy Award in 2010 for his "character, courage, contribution and commitment."

Others to consider

Maurice Harrell, Dodge County, football: The former Dodge County standout earned four letters at Georgia. He signed with the San Diego Chargers following college.

Coming up in The Numbers Game

The Numbers Game continues throughout the summer:

July 29: The 30s

Aug. 5: The 20s

Aug. 12: The 10s

Aug. 19: Single digits

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To see even more athletes we considered, go to Jonathan Heeter's blog at macon.com/heetsblog.

LITTLE LEAGUE SOFTBALL, 10C

Georgia gets its first win in the Southeastern Regional Tournament, beating Alabama.



Bill Shanks

Braves trying to avoid Teixeira repeat

Five years ago, the Atlanta Braves took a gamble. They needed another bat in the lineup, and Texas made first baseman Mark Teixeira available.

Scott Thorman had failed at first base after Atlanta traded away Adam LaRoche. The Braves had tried catcher Jarrod Saltalamacchia at first, but it was obvious he was a catcher playing first base. So the Braves traded five young prospects to the Rangers for Teixeira and left-handed reliever Ron Mahay.

Teixeira had the rest of 2007 and all of 2008 left on his contract. The Braves hoped Teixeira, who played college ball at Georgia Tech, would want to stay in Atlanta and sign a long-term contract.

But that never happened. Teixeira put up good numbers, but the Braves struggled. They tried to get him to re-sign, but Teixeira was looking for a landmark contract, so he was traded away for two players who are since long gone.

Four of the five players who were traded to Texas have turned out pretty good. Shortstop Elvis Andrus is a two-time All-Star. Neftali Feliz became the Rangers' closer and helped them make two straight World Series trips. And Matt Harrison is having one of the best seasons for any pitcher in the AL this season.

Saltalamacchia was also in the deal. He has moved on to Boston, and 'Salty' is finally turning the corner with a great season for the Red Sox.

So the Braves went for it in 2007, and it backfired. They did not make the playoffs with Teixeira in the lineup. They did not re-sign Teixeira, and most of the players they traded for him have turned out to be pretty good players.

That trade almost has become a moniker for teams that want a lot in return for a player who will soon be a free agent. For instance, when Miami put starter Josh Johnson on the trade market last week, word got out that the Marlins wanted a "Teixeira-like return" for their ace pitcher.

Four days ago, I wrote the Braves didn't need to panic. I thought they were about to do that if they had traded Randall Delgado, who has made 17 starts this season, to the Chicago Cubs for Ryan Dempster. The Chicago right-hander is a rental, as his contract is up at the end of this season. The 35-year-old Dempster blocked the trade, and thankfully Delgado is still with the Braves.

On Friday, the Braves lost out on another available pitcher, when Milwaukee traded Zack Greinke to the Los Angeles Angels. Greinke will be a free agent this fall, right when he turns 29.

SEE SHANKS, 12C

Minor sharp in win over Phillies

By CHARLES ODUM
AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA — Mike Minor struck out nine and combined with Craig Kimbrel on a four-hitter, Jason Heyward had two hits and drove in a run, and the Atlanta Braves edged Joe Blanton and the Philadelphia Phillies 2-1 on Saturday night.

Minor (6-7) allowed one run on four hits and no walks in

eight innings. His nine strikeouts matched his season high. He retired the final 13 batters he faced.

The Phillies' only run came on Chase Utley's homer in the fourth.

Kimbrel pitched a perfect ninth for his 30th save. Utley was caught looking at Kimbrel's 99 mph fastball for a strike to end the game.

The Braves, who lost 12 of 18

games to the Phillies in 2011, are 6-2 against Philadelphia with five straight wins in 2012. Atlanta swept a three-game series July 6-8 at Philadelphia and will try to complete another three-game sweep on Sunday.

Minor made his longest start since lasting eight innings in a win at Arizona on April 19. He has not allowed more than two runs in any of his four starts

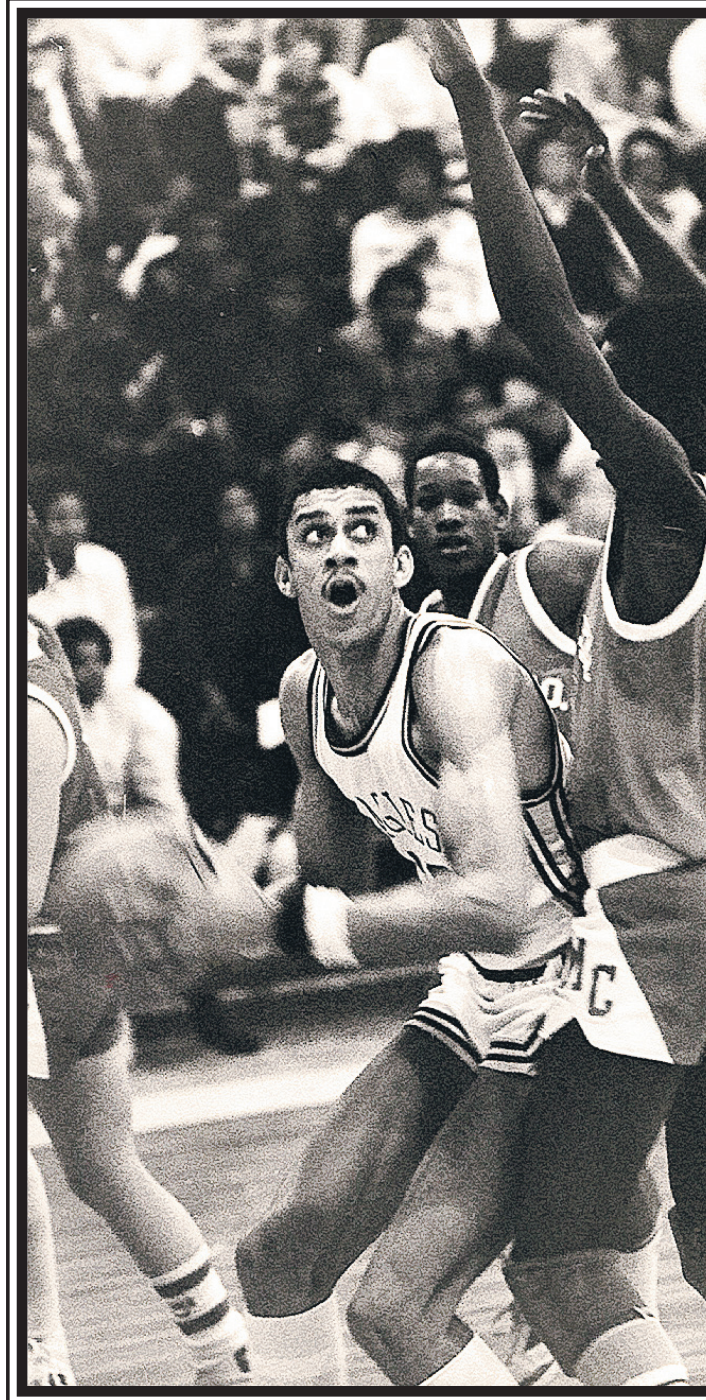
in July.

Blanton (8-9) gave up two runs on four hits with one walk and seven strikeouts in seven innings.

Blanton and Minor began the night ranked first and second, respectively, among NL pitchers in home runs allowed. Minor matched Blanton's 22 homers allowed on Utley's blast into the center field seats.

Braves 2,
Phillies 1

Next: vs. Phillies, 1:35 p.m., Sunday (Fox Sports South)



Telegraph File Photos

Walker, Wright & a TREE



A look at Middle Georgia's all-time greats

This week's installment of The Numbers Game, looking at athletes who wore jersey numbers in the 30s while in high school, features a heavy emphasis on basketball, including one of the Atlanta Hawks' all-time greats.

Pages 8-9C.

Georgia moves forward with what's left of roster

By SETH EMERSON
semerson@macon.com

ALSO

■ Georgia Tech gears up for start of practice, 12C

ATHENS — Too many times this offseason, Mark Richt has fielded uncomfortable phone calls. Or the Georgia head football coach has had to sigh and look over another news release, announcing the departure of another one of his players.

"There's more attrition in the last couple years than there's been since I've been at Georgia," Richt said last week, in his understated manner. "But you know, sometimes that happens. We'll still have plenty of

guys to field a team."

This week Richt and his staff finally get to start molding what's left — and they believe they have plenty left.

The Bulldogs saw a number of transfers and dismissals, none more notorious than tailback Isaiah Crowell, following a June arrest. They enter the preseason with fewer than 70 players recruited on scholarship, well below the NCAA limit



BUTCH DILL/Associated Press

Georgia head coach Mark Richt's team opens practice Thursday.

it of 85. And yet Georgia is still the consensus pick to

SEE GEORGIA, 12C

Hancock set to begin chase for second gold

By MICHAEL A. LOUGH
mlough@macon.com

Intensity and focus won't be issues for Vincent Hancock.

After all, it wasn't all that long ago that doubts were growing that he

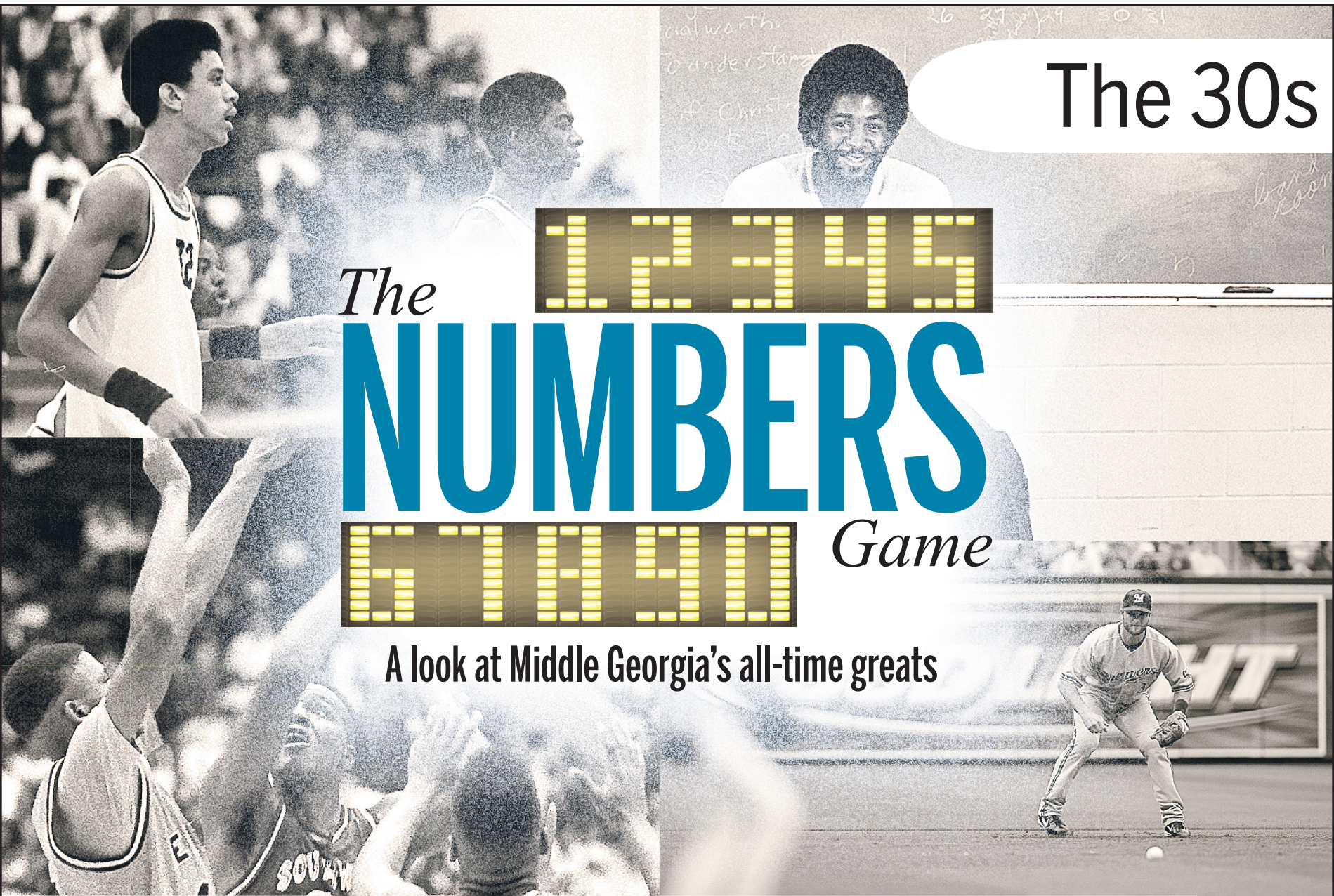
would be able to defend the gold medal in men's skeet that he won at the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

He was tired, in the

middle of a growing family, battling a shoulder injury and just wasn't himself.

"There were definitely some moments of concern," said his wife Rebekah, who married Hancock in May of 2008, only a few months before the games in Beijing. "I was really wondering if he would be able to keep things going. He seemed to lose all drive and determination to shoot."

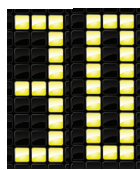
SEE HANCOCK, 12C



The 30s

The NUMBERS Game

A look at Middle Georgia's all-time greats



Tree Rollins, Crisp County, basketball

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Go to macon.com for more photos of the players who were chosen, as well as Jonathan Heeter's podcast.

selected Rollins in the first round of the 1977 NBA draft. Rollins played 11 of his 18 NBA seasons with the Hawks. Rollins made the NBA All-Defensive Team in 1983-84. He finished in the top three in blocks in each of his first six NBA seasons. Rollins is still eighth in NBA history in career blocks after retiring third all-time. He is the Hawks' franchise leader in blocks with 978 more than than the next closest player. Rollins played for four teams in his final seven NBA seasons, retiring with the Orlando Magic in 1995. Rollins coached both NBDL and WNBA teams following his retirement.

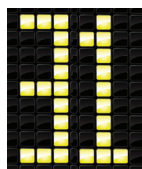
Why we picked him: Like few of the entrants in the Numbers Game, Rollins kept his same jersey number at every level. He wore No. 30 for 22 of his 24 seasons of basketball beginning in high school, with the lone exception coming in his two years with the Houston Rockets beginning in 1991. It also doesn't hurt that a majority of his NBA career was spent with the hometown Hawks. He is among the franchise leaders in blocks (first), games played (second), field-goal percentage (third), offensive rebounds (third) and defensive rebounds (second).

Others to consider
Latavia Coleman, Southwest, basketball: The all-state pick averaged 17 points as a senior. She played four years at Florida State, where she led the Seminoles in scoring all four seasons. She left school fifth all-time in scoring and a two-time All-ACC second team pick. She was drafted in the third round of the 2000 WNBA Draft by the Houston Comets. Coleman was later named an ACC Legend and now coaches at Howard.

Monquencio Hardnett, Central, basketball: Hardnett left Central

and earned two letters at Connecticut, where he played in 70 games and averaged 5.7 points.

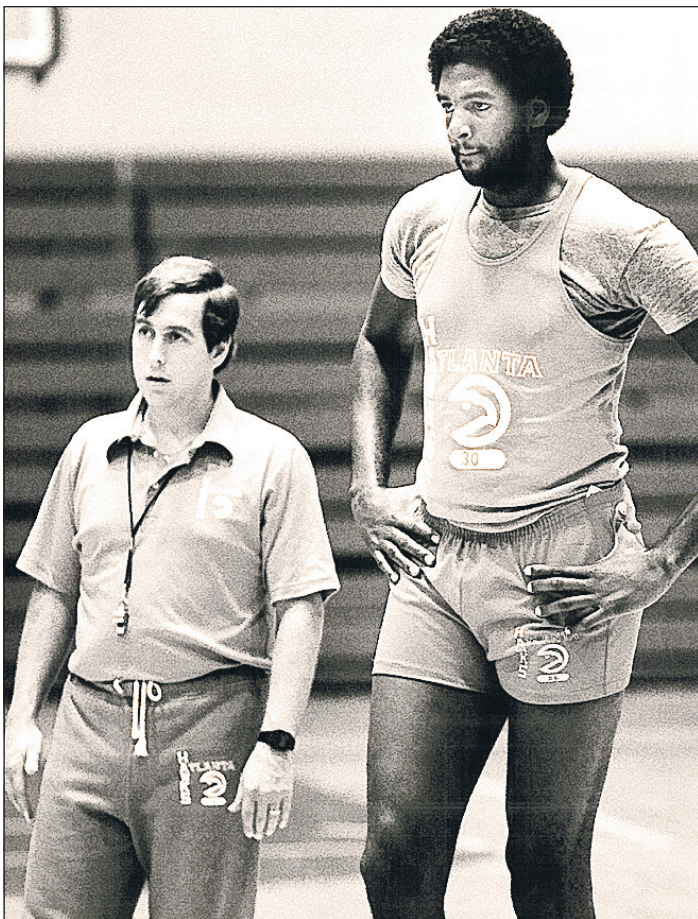
April Johnson, Jones County, basketball: Johnson was The Telegraph's All-Middle Georgia Player of the Year in 2002. The all-state selection ended her prep career as Jones County's all-time leading scorer. She played at Georgia Tech before suffering career ending knee injuries after her sophomore season.



Lee Martin, Perry, basketball

Bio: While teaming with Dwayne Powell, Martin helped lead Perry to an undefeated state championship in 1962. Martin averaged 20 points per game for the champion Panthers, who won their sixth title under head coach Eric Staples. Martin scored 41 points in a memorable win over Lanier at the Macon City Auditorium during his senior season. Martin then dominated in a postseason all-star game, scoring 26 points and dishing out 19 assists. He attended Georgia following his prep career, eventually morphing into a starter as a senior. Martin averaged 7.6 points as a senior playing alongside fellow Middle Georgian Jerry Waller in 1965-66.

Why we picked him: There are so many greats to pick from during the Eric Staples era, including Billy and Dwayne Powell and even future United



Telegraph File Photo

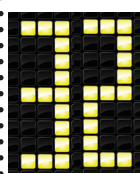
Tree Rollins was a standout at Crisp County before a strong career at Clemson. He was drafted in the first round by Atlanta in 1977 and played 11 of his 18 NBA seasons with the Hawks.

States Senator Sam Nunn. But Martin was, without question, one of the best to play for Staples.

Others to consider
Doug Fincher, FPD, football: Fincher finished his prep career with 424 tackles, 26 tackles for loss and nine forced fumbles along with all-state teams in 1988 and 1989.

Andy Summers, Lanier, football: Summers made an all-state team for the Poets

in 1969. Summers played at Florida, coming up with a pair of fumbles to help the Gators beat LSU in 1974.



Kenny Walker, Crawford County, basketball

Bio: Walker led Crawford County — where he wore both Nos. 32 and 33 depending on home and away games — to consecutive state championships beginning in 1981. He averaged 25 points and 13 rebounds as a junior and 29 points and 18 rebounds as a senior. Walker went on to a stellar career at Kentucky after playing in the McDonald's All-American Game and being named Mr. Basketball as a senior. He averaged 22.9 points and 22 points his final two seasons in Lexington. Walker was the AP SEC Player of the Year both of those seasons, and he was a consensus first-team All-American in 1986. The New York Knicks selected Walker with the fifth overall pick in the 1986 NBA draft. Walker played seven seasons in the NBA, gaining most of his pro fame from winning the 1989 NBA Slam Dunk Contest. Walker's jersey is retired at Kentucky.

Why we picked him: If you list the five best high school basketball players in Middle Georgia history, you'd be hard pressed to not include Walker. No Middle Georgia basketball player can claim two SEC Player of the Year distinctions to go

along with a Mr. Basketball award and All-America honors.

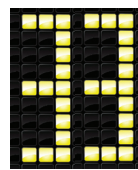
Others to consider
LaToya Davis, Mary Persons, basketball: Davis was a two-time Class AA Player of the Year and USA Today honorable mention All-America pick at Mary Persons. She scored 3,426 career points, averaging 26.5 points and 20 rebounds per game for her prep career. Davis lettered four seasons while playing for legendary head coach Pat Summitt at Tennessee.

Darrell Lockhart, R.E. Lee, basketball: Lockhart was a Parade All-American after averaging 30 points and 15 rebounds as a senior. He made the All-SEC third team in 1983 at Auburn. Lockhart spent a short time with the San Antonio Spurs after he left Auburn. The Spurs selected him in the second round of the 1983 NBA draft.

Todd Mickler, Tattnall Square, football: Mickler led Tattnall to a GISA championship and undefeated season in 1988. He accumulated 370 yards in the championship game win over FPD.

Hank Williams, Warner Robins, football: Williams and the next player at No. 32 might have a tussle over who is the second best back in school history behind James Brooks. Williams' case: two all-state teams, an undefeated season, a mythical national title, a Warner Robins-Northside rushing record with 232 yards in a 21-14 win in 1981 and 1,546 rushing yards in 1981. Williams signed with Jacksonville State.

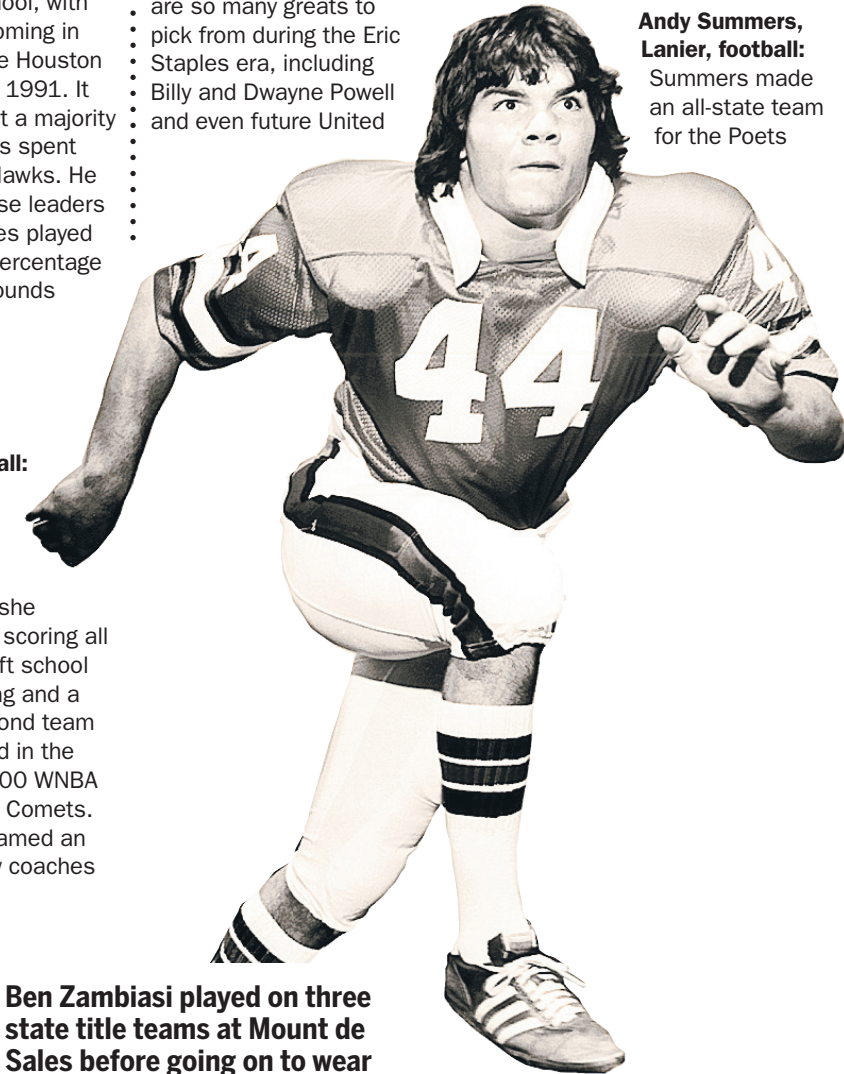
Jimmy Womack, Warner Robins, football: Womack rushed for 1,467 as the Demons' second option in 1976, helping to lead Warner Robins to the state championship and mythical national title. Womack started three seasons at Georgia, including as the fullback for Herschel Walker during the Bulldogs' 1980 national championship run.



Ben Zambiasi, Mount de Sales, football

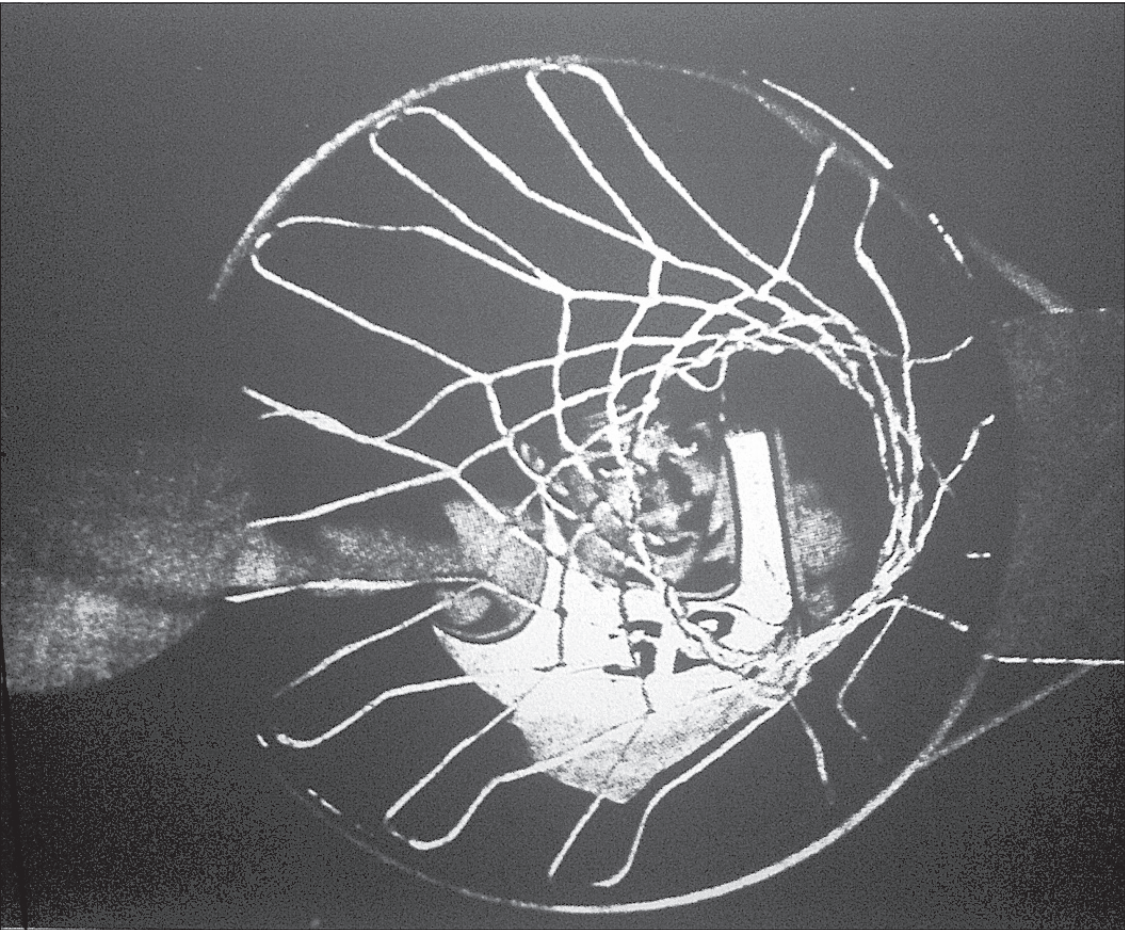
Bio: Zambiasi played on all three of the Cavaliers' GHSA state championship teams from 1970-73. Zambiasi rushed for 133 yards and two touchdowns as a senior in the 1973 championship game. Zambiasi went on to stardom at Georgia, where he was named to All-SEC teams as a linebacker in both 1976 and 1977. Zambiasi

SEE NUMBERS, 9C



Ben Zambiasi played on three state title teams at Mount de Sales before going on to wear No. 44 and playing linebacker at Georgia.

University of Georgia



Kenny Walker won consecutive state championships at Crawford County and was a McDonald's All-American. He was the AP SEC Player of the Year in his final two seasons with the Kentucky Wildcats.

Telegraph File Photo

NUMBERS FROM 8C

still holds the school record for career tackles with 467. Zambiasi went on get drafted by the Chicago Bears in 1978, but he made his name in the CFL. He led the Hamilton Tiger-Cats to the 1986 Grey Cup. He made eight all-star teams and was named the CFL's defensive player of the year in 1979. Zambiasi is in the CFL Hall of Fame, the Georgia Circle of Honor and the Macon Sports Hall of Fame. He also made Georgia's All-Century Team and was named an SEC Football Legend in 2010.

Why we picked him: Former Georgia head coach Vince Dooley stated Zambiasi's importance, saying, "In all my years of coaching, I never coached a more intense and tenacious football player than Ben Zambiasi." Mount de Sales went 41-4 from 1970-73 in no small part to Zambiasi's play.

Others to consider
Edwana Austin, Appling, basketball: Austin averaged 33.8 points per game to lead Appling to the 1964 state championship.

Ed Beck, Fort Valley, basketball: Beck scored 1,549 points in high school to lead Fort Valley to two state titles. He played in 78 games for Adolph Rupp at Kentucky. He averaged a career high 9.5 points in 1956-57, earning All-SEC second team honors. He played for the Wildcats' 1958 national championship team.

Colby Jackson, Trinity Christian, football: Jackson rushed for 2,597 yards and 42 touchdowns as a senior at Trinity Christian. He made two all-state teams, and he won two state wrestling championships. Jackson played college football at N.C. State.

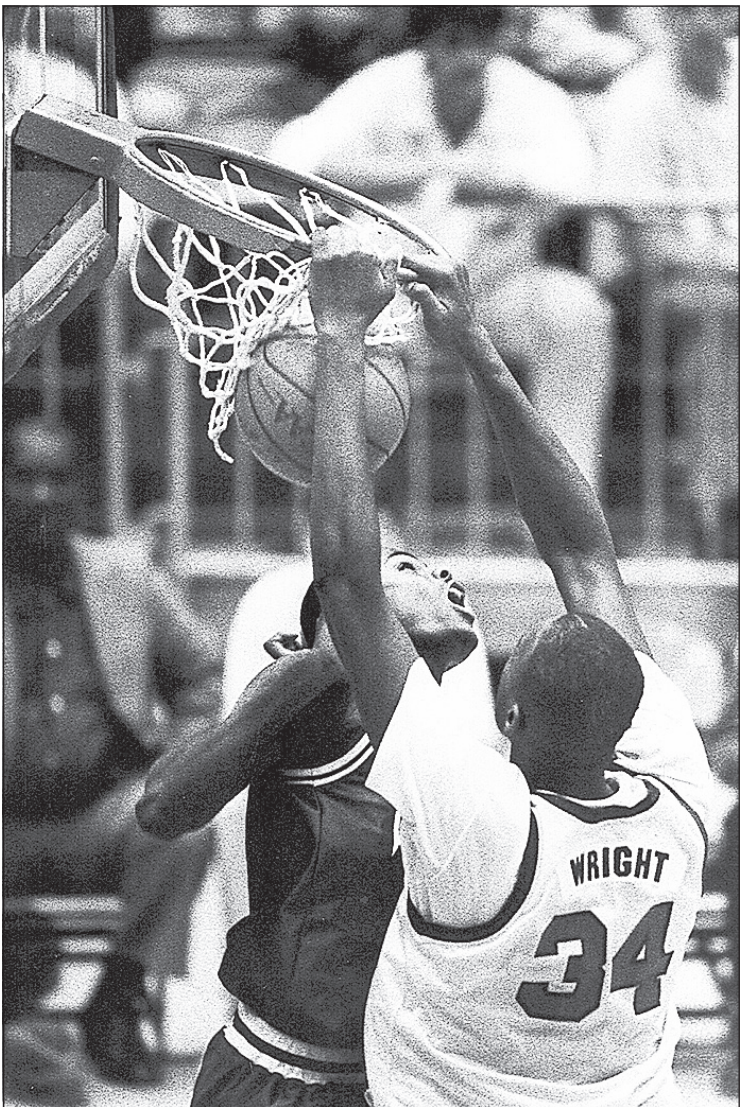
Myles Patrick, Southwest, basketball: Patrick was on the Patriots' first state championship team in 1973. He went on to earn four letters at Auburn, averaging 8.3 points and 6.5 rebounds in his career. Patrick had a brief stint with the Los Angeles Lakers alongside high school teammate Norm Nixon.

Bruce Bishop, Stratford, football: A star during the early seasons of the Eagles' program, Bishop helped lead the team to two state titles. He rushed for nearly 3,000 yards and 41 touchdowns in his career.



Sharone Wright, Southwest, basketball

Bio: Wright played on the last of head coach Don Richardson's teams at Southwest, winning a state title as a sophomore and playing in the semifinals and quarterfinals his final two seasons. Wright went on to Clemson after being named a McDonald's All-American. He finished second in the nation in blocks per game as a sophomore, and Wright remains 10th in ACC history in blocks. He averaged 15 points per game his final two seasons at Clemson before getting selected No. 6 overall



Telegraph file photo

Sharone Wright won a state title at Southwest and was a McDonald's All-American before starring at Clemson. He was picked sixth in the 1994 NBA draft by Philadelphia.

by the Philadelphia 76ers in the 1994 NBA draft. Wright averaged more than 11 points during his first two professional seasons, but a car accident in 1997 essentially ended his NBA career. Wright was named an ACC Legend in 2012.

Why we picked him: Wright was the last of Richardson's long legacy of great Southwest players. Wright followed in the footsteps of fellow Middle Georgians Horace Grant and Tree Rollins at Clemson, and he became one of the most productive college players with Middle Georgia roots.

Others to consider
Shana Askew, Southwest, basketball: Askew made three all-state teams and helped lead Southwest to consecutive state runner-up finishes in 1994 and 1995. Askew played at Auburn, where she started 68 games in four seasons. Askew remains in the top 10 in school history in 3-point field goals.

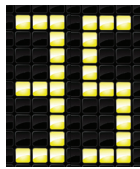
Ben Crain, Dublin, football: Crain earned Class A back of the year honors in 1959 while helping lead the Irish to a state title.

Tom Greene, Lanier, football: Greene was a two-time All-Southern selection at Auburn. He went on to make the All-SEC team in 1941 at Georgia. The award for Georgia's best Middle Georgia player is named after Greene, who was drafted by the Los Angeles Rams in 1942.

Warren McLendon, West Laurens, basketball: McLendon averaged 21 points and 12 rebounds to lead the Raiders to the state title in 2004. He made the Southern Conference's all-freshman team in 2005 at The Citadel.

Jack Scott, Crawford County Training, basketball: Scott starred at Mercer before becoming a Harlem Globetrotter.

J.T. Wall, John Milledge, football: A three-time all-state pick in high school, Wall rushed for 4,594 yards and 66 touchdowns from 1994-97. He also added more than 500 tackles. After playing at Southwest Baptist, Wall transferred to Georgia, where he scored five touchdowns as a fullback on the Bulldogs' 2002 SEC championship team. Wall had a short stint with the Pittsburgh Steelers, and he now serves as head coach at John Milledge.



Bunny Fuller, Taylor County, basketball

Bio: Fuller was a big part of Taylor County's girls basketball dynasty in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The Vikings won a state-record 132 straight games and five consecutive state championships during the span. Fuller's teams went 117-3 during her four years, never lost at Taylor County's gym and won state championships all four seasons. Fuller made three all-state teams and was named the most valuable forward in the state tournament three times. Fuller averaged around 22 points for her career. She scored more than 2,200 points in high school, finishing with at least 23 30-point games and four 40-point games with a career high of 47. Her best season came as a sophomore in 1969-70 when she averaged 29.4 points. Fuller would go on to letter two seasons at Georgia.

Why we picked her: Fuller and Sissy Riley are probably

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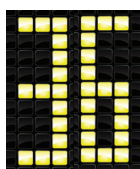
the two greatest players during Taylor County's unprecedented run. Fuller, however, won four straight titles, an accomplishment that few Middle Georgians in history can claim. Statistics for 22 of her high school games, including 10 during her senior year, are missing, so you can only guess what that does to her already impressive high school numbers.

Others to consider
Stacy Nobles, Trinity Christian, football: Nobles was a three-time All America honorable mention at Liberty University and made a Division I-AA All-Independent team in 1998. Nobles holds the career touchdown record at Liberty with 35, and he had 17 100-yard games. He is second in all-time rushing yardage with 3,711 yards.

Derrell Parker, Willingham, football: Parker was an All-Southern honorable mention to go along with Back of the Year honors from The Telegraph in 1965. He signed with Georgia Tech.

Lee St. John, Perry, football: St. John landed on all-state teams in 1966 and 1967.

Red Whitten, Lanier, football: Whitten earned all-state honors in 1950 before earning three letters at Clemson.



Russell Branyan, Stratford, baseball

Bio: Branyan helped lead Stratford to a GISA championship in 1994 shortly before getting drafted by the Cleveland Indians in the seventh round of the amateur draft. Branyan broke into the big leagues as a 22-year-old in 1998. He remained in the majors for 14 seasons, playing for the Indians, Cincinnati Reds, Milwaukee Brewers, Tampa Bay Rays, San Diego Padres, Philadelphia Phillies, St. Louis Cardinals, Seattle Mariners, Arizona Diamondbacks and Los Angeles Angels. Branyan hit 20 home runs or more in a season four times in his career, with a high of 31 in 2009 with the Mariners. Branyan hit 194 career home runs, ranking him second behind Rondell White among Middle Georgians.

Why we picked him: Plenty of Middle Georgians have been drafted earlier than Branyan, but very few had as impactful a career. Few athletes in any sport can claim a 14-year pro career.

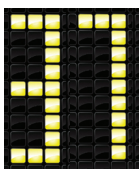
Others to consider
William Ivory, Northside, football: Ivory started for three years at running back for the Eagles before playing at Savannah State.

Deauntay Legrier, Wilcox County, football: The coaches pick for Class A Defensive Player of the Year in 2007, Legrier earned consensus all-state honors leading the Patriots to the state championship game. He had 22 sacks his final two years at Wilcox County. Legrier has started 18 games in three seasons at Western Michigan, collecting 100 tackles, 17 tackles for loss and 5.5 sacks.

Jimmy Seward, Lanier, football: Seward made an all-state team as a senior in 1960 before earning three letters at Georgia Tech.

Henry Taylor, Baldwin, football: Taylor went on to letter four seasons at Florida State, earning first-team All-South Independent honors and honorable mention All-America honors in 1984. He is still 11th in Florida State history in career tackles, and his 159 tackles in 1984 are fifth best in program history.

Derrick Wimbush, Taylor County, football: Wimbush exploded on to the scene at Fort Valley State, where he rushed for 1,840 yards and 22 touchdowns as a senior and became a finalist for the Harlon Hill Trophy as Division II's top player. He played three seasons for the Jacksonville Jaguars.

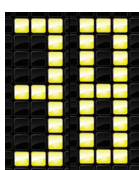


Shannon Hall, Central, football

Bio: Hall exploded on the scene as a junior in 1981, rushing for 1,200 yards for Central. A year later, Hall racked up 1,742 yards and 17 touchdowns on the ground while helping the Chargers rack up a 9-3 record in 1982. Hall made the all-state team following his senior year. He signed with Albany State.

Why we picked him: Hall's monster senior season is among the best for a running back in Bibb County history. In the 30 years since Hall made the all-state team, only one Bibb County running back — Westside's Travis Evans — has received all-state honors.

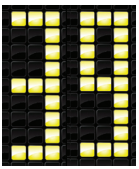
Others to consider
Tim Perry, R.E. Lee, football: Perry rushed for 1,538 yards and 17 touchdowns on R.E. Lee's 1988 state championship team.



Billy Kitchens, Lanier, football

Bio: Kitchens earned Back of the Year honors as a senior in 1953 as the Poets lost in the state championship game to Erk Russell's Grady Grey Knights. Kitchens earned three letters and played on Auburn's 1957 national championship team.

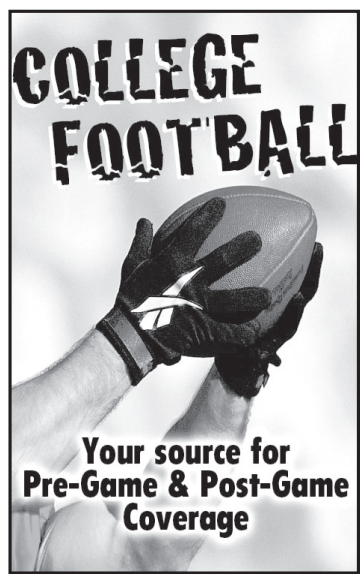
Why we picked him: Kitchens was arguably the top player on the final Lanier team to play for a state championship. The Poets won 11 games in 1953, one of only two times they accomplished that under legendary head coach Selby Buck.



K.J. Morton, Northside, football

Bio: Much like was the case with No. 93, No. 39 just didn't have a ton of worthy candidates for the list, so we picked a player who was plenty worthy and who wore the number earlier in his career. Morton wore No. 39 as a sophomore at Northside before wearing No. 4 following the graduation of Deonta Jordan. Morton played on two state title teams at Northside in 2006 and 2007. Morton made the all-state team in 2007. Morton signed with Georgia State, but he ended up at the College of the Sequoias for a year. Morton transferred to Baylor, where he started 11 games as a sophomore in 2011. Morton was an honorable mention All-Big 12 after intercepting four passes, including an interception in the Bears' upset win over then ranked No. 5 Oklahoma. He made nine tackles in the Alamo Bowl win over Washington.

Why we picked him: It was a struggle to find a quality No. 39, so we found a way to honor a great high school player in Morton who wore No. 39 for a season. Based on our findings, Nos. 39 and 93 are the two most difficult to find quality candidates.



OLYMPICS, 5C

Michael Phelps concludes his Olympic swimming career with a final gold medal in the 4x100-meter medley relay.



Bill Shanks

NL playoff races are heating up

Now that the trade deadline has passed and we know what the rosters will look like for the stretch drive, it's obvious the Atlanta Braves are going to be in one check of a pennant race in the NL for the next two months.

The first-place Washington Nationals didn't really do anything to help their roster, but they could have argued they didn't really need to. They've either led or tied for the NL East lead for all but 10 days this season. Washington is pretty good, with a great pitching staff, a great manager in Davey Johnson and a lineup that is better now with outfielder Jayson Werth back from his injury.

The biggest thing to watch with the Nationals will be Stephen Strasburg. Will Washington shut down the ace pitcher after 160 innings, as they have threatened to do? Most believe it's a smokescreen. Why would you not allow your best starter to pitch when you need him the most?

But here's another question about Washington. Teams that are pretty new to first place sometimes hit a slump in August. If that happens to the Nationals, can they dig themselves out of a hole? What if Atlanta catches the Nationals? Those Washington players have never really been in a race before, so will they collapse, or are the Nationals good enough to avoid the dog days of a summer slump?

In the NL Central, Cincinnati has been red-hot (pun intended) the past three weeks. They were 18-3 since the All-Star break entering Saturday's game against Pittsburgh. The Reds just added Jonathan Broxton to the bullpen, and putting him with Aroldis Chapman gives Cincinnati two unbelievable flamethrowers at the end of the pitching staff.

Remember the last time Cincinnati won the World Series, in 1990? They had Rob Dibble, Norm Charlton and Randy Myers — three outstanding relievers who threw heat. That franchise is hoping for the same luck with the same formula this year.

Pittsburgh teased us last year with a strong first half, but the Pirates flattened out and became the same old Pirates after that long, 19-inning loss in Atlanta on July 26. So far this season, Pittsburgh has not really hit a roadblock. They are right with Atlanta as the two wild-card leaders right now, but it will be a test to see if the young Pirates, who have never been in a pennant race, can keep up the pace.

Don't forget about St. Louis. While the Cardinals are back a bit in the NL Central, they started Saturday only 3½

SEE SHANKS, 11C

Georgia bounces back, tops Florida

By ANGELA WOOLEN
awoolen@macon.com

WARNER ROBINS — The Georgia bats finally came alive Saturday in the Little League Baseball Southeastern Regional Tournament, as the team from Warner Robins American

Little League rallied from a five-run deficit to defeat Florida 7-6.

The win came after Georgia lost its initial pool play game Friday night, 10-2 to North Carolina.

Both coach Randy Dempsey and manager Martin Pinckney said the players had deer in the headlights looks Friday night but came out Saturday ready to play.

"(Pinckney) told us we had to flush (Friday) night down the toilet," relief pitcher Tee Adams said.

After giving up four runs in the first inning Saturday, Georgia started playing fundamental baseball.

In the bottom of the fourth inning and down two runs, Georgia manufactured three runs to take the lead.

Chase Padgett reached first on an error. Leyton Pinckney placed down a perfect bunt.

Kody Winner struck out, but Cameron Jones reached second on an error one batter later, scoring Padgett. Adams hit a sacrifice to tie the game at 6, scoring Pinckney, then Connor Bookout hit a single to score Jones for the go-ahead run.

Martin Pinckney said once the team started getting momentum, he could sense a difference in how things were going.

"You could see it in their eyes that they started believing," the manager said.

Leyton Pinckney pitched the first two innings for

SEE GEORGIA, 11C



BEAU CABELL/bcabell@macon.com

Georgia manager Martin Pinckney had nothing but big hugs for his team Saturday after the team from Warner Robins put down a scoring threat by Florida in the top of the sixth inning Saturday to seal a 7-6 win in the Little League Baseball Southeastern Regional Tournament.

Breaking stereotypes

Bulldogs center Andrews is trying to prove that height isn't a defining factor for his position

By SETH EMERSON
semerson@macon.com

ATHENS — Everyone has stopped dancing around it. David Andrews is short. He knows that. His coaches know that.

"There's nothing I can do about it," said the presumed starting center for the Georgia football team. "It's what God blessed me with. I can't stretch myself to get any taller. I don't get self-conscious."

At this point, it bears noting that Andrews isn't actually THAT short. Officially, he is listed at 6-foot-2 and 295 pounds; the height might be generous. Either way, that places him both taller and heavier than about 90 percent of the general population.

The problem is, Andrews plays football. When the Georgia offensive line is grouped together during drills, one can pick Andrews out fairly easily, because he is ...

"Shorter," head coach Mark Richt said Friday, finishing a reporter's sentence.

It's not just his current teammates. Andrews, a sophomore, is replacing four-year starter Ben Jones, who was a couple inches taller and 20 pounds

heavier, one-fifth of the largest offensive line in the country.

Now one of the prime jobs is set to go to someone who gets cracked on for his size.

"It used to (tick) me off. Coach Friend and Coach Bobo cracking jokes and stuff," Andrews said, speaking of his position coach and offensive coordinator. "It's just kind of fuels you to work harder and stuff. There's been centers that play my height."

One in particular is Andrews' role model. Jeff Saturday, also listed at 6-2 and 295, has been an All-Pro four times and was Peyton Manning's center for a long time in Indianapolis.

Saturday, who grew up in the Atlanta area, played collegiately at North Carolina. He was undrafted in 1998 but has had a long career,

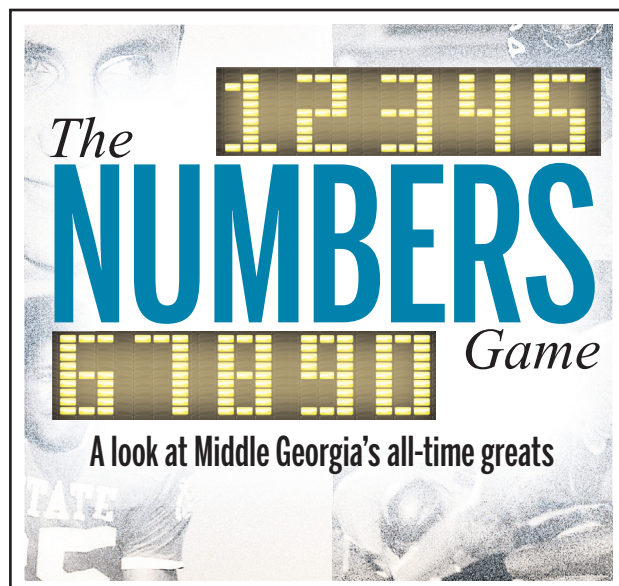
SEE ANDREWS, 11C



BEAU CABELL/bcabell@macon.com

David Andrews, who tops Georgia's depth chart at center at the start of preseason practice, is 6-foot-2 and 295 pounds.

INSIDE



THE 20s. PAGES 8-9C.

Maxwell lifts Astros past Braves

By GEORGE HENRY
Associated Press

ATLANTA — Justin Maxwell had a career-high four hits, including two homers, rookie Lucas Harrell won his first career start at Turner Field, and the Houston Astros snapped a four-game losing streak with a 3-2 win over Atlanta on Saturday.

The Astros won for just the fourth time in 33 games, improving to 11-45 on the road — the worst mark in the majors.

Paul Maholm (9-7) lost his Atlanta debut — three runs, six hits, and two walks. He struck out eight in sev-

en innings.

The Braves had won two straight and nine of 10.

Harrell allowed two runs and four hits with five walks and five strikeouts in six innings. Since losing at Texas on May 16, the right-hander is 3-2 with a 2.26 ERA.

Wilton Lopez got two outs to earn his second career save, the other coming in 2010. He had converted one of his previous 11 save opportunities.

Lopez, who took over as closer following the trade

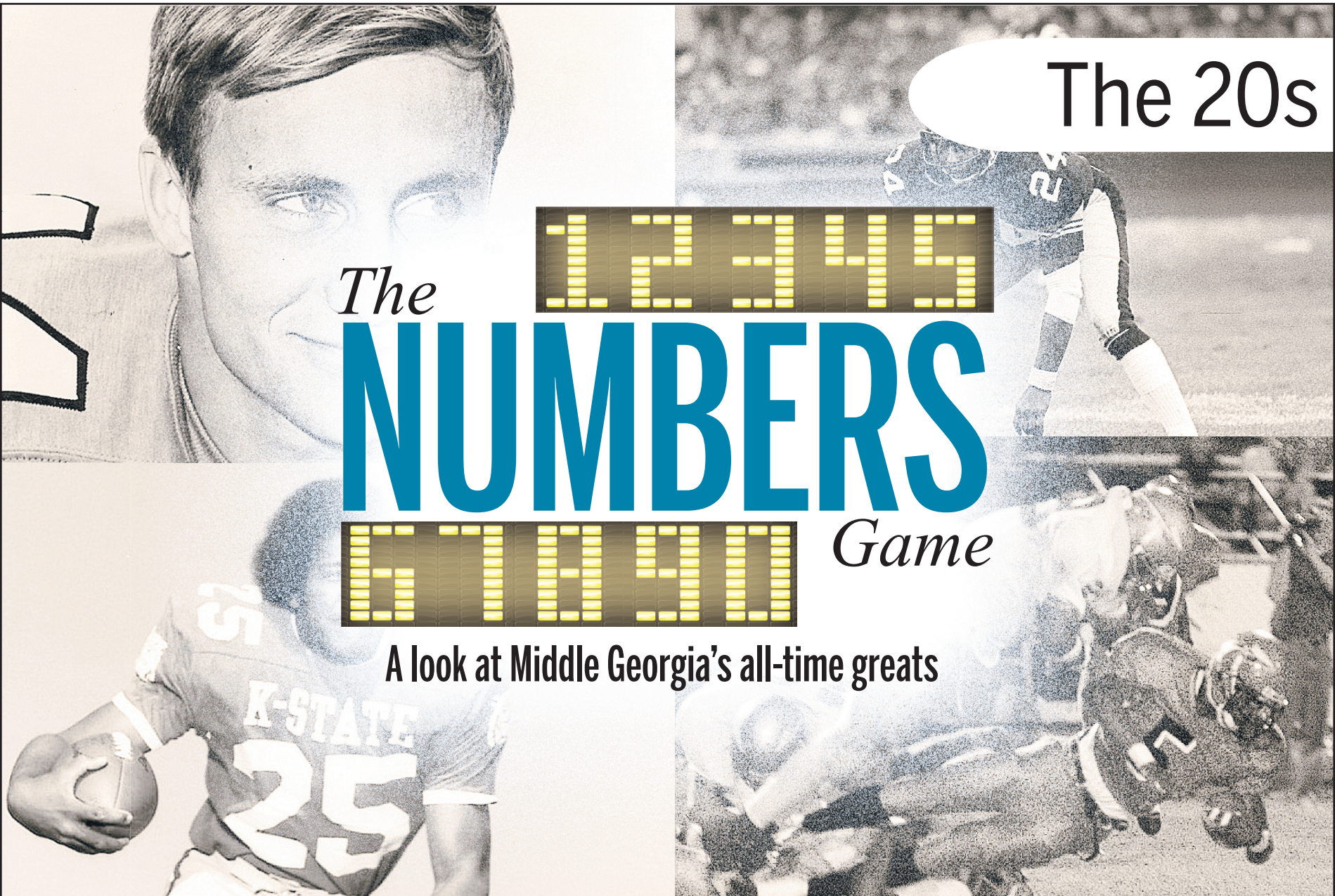
Astros 3, Braves 2

Next: vs. Astros, 1:35 p.m., Sunday (Fox Sports South)



of Brett Myers and a foot injury to newly acquired Francisco Cordero, relieved Wesley Wright with the bases empty. He walked Dan Uggla before pinch-hitter Juan Francisco grounded into a double play.

Maxwell's two-run shot made it 2-0 in the fourth, and he added his 12th homer leading off the seventh to give Houston a 3-2 lead. It was his first two-homer game since he played for Washington in an 11-3 loss at Florida on Sept. 12, 2009.

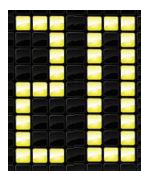


The 20s

The NUMBERS

Game

A look at Middle Georgia's all-time greats



Eddie Anderson, Warner Robins, football

macon.com
ONLINE
Go to macon.com for more photos of the players who were chosen, as well as Jonathan Heeter's podcast.

Bio: Anderson made the all-state and All-Middle Georgia team as a senior in 1981, the same year he helped the Demons win a state championship and their second mythical national title. Anderson went on to a solid

career at Fort Valley State. The Seattle Seahawks selected Anderson in the sixth round of the 1986 NFL draft. Anderson played just one year in Seattle before spending 11 years with the Los Angeles/Oakland Raiders. Anderson started 116 games at free safety for the Raiders, finishing his career with 19 interceptions and 813 tackles.

Why we picked him: This was a tough choice between Anderson and Eric Manuel. Anderson gets the nod because of the totality of his career. Had Manuel not run into trouble with the NCAA, he may have been one of the greats to play at Kentucky. For now, that's speculation, while Anderson had one of the longest pro careers of any Middle Georgian.

Others to consider

Jessie Cainion, Warner Robins, football: The All-Southern pick was also named The Telegraph Player of the Year in 1977. Cainion signed with East Carolina.

Donald Hartry, Baldwin, basketball: Hartry landed on the McDonald's All-American team after averaging 21 points and seven rebounds as a senior in 1982. He started for two seasons at Georgia.

Aaron Jackson, Macon County, football: Jackson rushed for 1,942 yards to lead Macon County to a state championship in 1996.

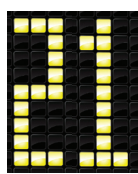
Eric Manuel, Southwest, basketball: Manuel was named Georgia's Mr. Basketball and made Parade All-American and McDonald's All-American teams in 1987. Manuel signed with Kentucky and made the SEC's All-Freshman team before the NCAA ruled him ineligible. He finished his career at Oklahoma City University, where he led the team to consecutive NAIA championships in 1991 and 1992. He played a short time with the New Jersey Nets.

Jason Russell, Stratford, soccer: Russell was named The Telegraph Player of the Year in 1994 after setting the then-school record with 92 career goals. Russell later played at Georgia Southern and professionally with the USL

A-League New Orleans Storm.

Barry Veal, FPD, basketball/baseball: Veal is one of the best two-sport athletes in GISA history. He scored 1,979 career points and had a single-game high of 52 in 1981. He played college baseball at Mercer, where he was a two-time All-TAAC player. Veal still holds Mercer's single season record for steals with 30.

Tim Jackson, Mount de Sales, football: Jackson was one of the greats in Mount de Sales history, winning five state titles (two in football and three in baseball) in high school. He went to Georgia.



James Brooks, Warner Robins, football

Bio: Brooks was named state back of the year after helping to lead the Demons to the 1976 state championship and mythical national title. He rushed for 1,810 yards as a senior. Brooks went to Auburn, where he made two All-SEC teams. He remains Auburn's all-purpose yardage leader with 5,596 yards and is third in school history in rushing yardage. Brooks was a first-round pick of the San Diego Chargers in 1981. He made four Pro Bowls, all of which came with the Cincinnati Bengals. He left Cincinnati in 1991 as the franchise's leading rusher. He finished his career with 7,962 yards and 49

touchdowns on the ground and 14,910 all-purpose yards and 79 touchdowns. Brooks is still ranked 29th in NFL history in all-purpose yards.

Why we picked him: Along with Ron Simmons, Brooks might be the most important player in Warner Robins history. Brooks led an outstanding rushing attack along with Jimmy Womack and Keith Soles that led to the 1976 state championship. His numbers in college and in the NFL are equally impressive, confirmed by his name still landing on the pages of record books for both.

Others to consider

Earnest Byner, Baldwin, football: Byner rushed for 2,049 yards in his career at East Carolina, and he was a 10th round pick by the Cleveland Browns in 1984. Byner rushed for 8,261 yards and 56 touchdowns and accumulated 13,442 all-purpose yards and 72 touchdowns in his 14-year NFL career. He had three 1,000-yard seasons, made two Pro Bowls and played for the Super Bowl winning Washington Redskins in 1992. Byner now coaches with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Michael Hicks, R.E. Lee, football: Hicks rushed for 2,413 yards and 38 touchdowns in 1991. He went on to an all-conference career at South Carolina State and eventually got drafted by the Chicago Bears.

Senario Hillman, Wilkinson County, basketball: Hillman made four all-state teams in high school, and he was The

Telegraph's Player of the Year in 2007 after leading the Warriors to a state title. Hillman started 68 of his 132 games played at Alabama.

He averaged a career-high 12.9 points in 2008-09.

M.A.

Linch, John

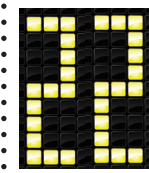
Milledge, softball:

Arguably the best fastpitch pitcher in GISA history, Linch won four consecutive state championships as the Trojans' ace. She was The Telegraph's Athlete of the Year in 2006. Linch made the All-MAC first team once (2010) and the second-team twice as a pitcher at Miami (Ohio). Linch is all over the Miami career record books: appearances (first all-time), wins (fourth), starts (second), complete games (fifth), strikeouts (fourth), innings pitched (fourth) and shutouts (sixth).

John Rucker, FPD, baseball: The standout pitcher at FPD went on a brief but strong career as Atlanta Braves'

closer. He saved 83 games for the Braves between 1999 and 2001, with a high of 38 in 1999.

Travares Tillman, Toombs County, football: Tillman followed an all-state prep career by earning four letters at Georgia Tech. He helped the Yellow Jackets win the ACC title in 1998. The Buffalo Bills drafted Tillman in the second round in 2000. He spent seven years in the NFL, starting 29 games.



Brent Cunningham, Putnam County, football

Bio: Not only is he the only Putnam County player to be named a state player of the year, but Cunningham earned the distinction in both 1966 and 1967. He put up some incredible numbers during Putnam County's run to the 1967 state championship. Consider this: Cunningham rushed for 1,822 yards and 35 touchdowns as a senior. He also had 403 receiving yards. He averaged 38 yards per touchdown and had nine touchdowns of more than 40 yards. Of his 1,822 rushing yards, he gained 1,332 yards on scoring plays. He also had seven interceptions. Cunningham went on to start from 1969-71 at Georgia Tech. He rushed for 1,446 yards and six touchdowns and added four receiving touchdowns in his career. He led the Yellow Jackets in rushing in 1969 and 1970 and made the All-Southeastern Independent team in 1970. Cunningham finished his college career as the fifth leading rusher in Georgia Tech history and went into the Georgia Tech Hall of Fame in 1982.

Why we picked him: You'd be hard pressed to find a better athlete in the history of Putnam County than Cunningham. He absolutely dominated his final two seasons in high school like few have ever done. He also played on state title teams in golf and baseball at Putnam County.

Others to consider

Jessica Burroughs, Houston County, softball: Burroughs' electric high school softball career ended with a 24-5 record and a 0.87 ERA with 272 strikeouts in 2011. She also hit .444 with seven home runs and 45 RBI to earn Telegraph player of the year honors. She will play at Florida State this season.

Mike Cavan, R.E. Lee, football: Cavan earned All-Southern honors as a high school senior despite battling through injuries. He was a two-year starter at Georgia, quarterbacking the 1968 Bulldogs to an 8-0-2 record

and SEC and Sugar Bowl championships. Cavan made the AP All-SEC second team in 1968.

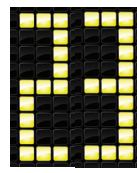
Marquita Driskell, Baldwin, basketball: Driskell averaged a double-double for three straight years at Baldwin and was named state player of the year as a senior. Driskell played at both Georgia and Georgia College.

Michael Hunt, Southwest, basketball: Hunt averaged 18 points as a senior during the Patriots' run to the 1979 mythical national championship. He went on to Furman, where he made the Southern Conference All-Freshman team and All-Southern Conference tournament team in 1980. Hunt went on to be a head coach at Towson and served as an assistant at Miami.

Tony Wesley, Mount de Sales, football: Wesley rushed for 2,046 yards and 28 touchdowns in 1997 and finished with more than 6,650 yards in three seasons. He helped Mount de Sales to the GISA championship in 1996. He played at Middle Tennessee State and then later at Valdosta State.

Phil Wallace, Dublin, basketball: Wallace averaged 25 points as a senior at Dublin before playing at Georgia and Texas Tech.

Xavier Whipple, Wilkinson County, basketball: Whipple helped lead Wilkinson County to state championships in 1999 and 2000. Whipple earned four letters at LSU.



Brenda Cliette, Northeast, basketball/track

Bio: Arguably the greatest female athlete in Bibb County history, Cliette was The Telegraph's basketball player of the year as a senior. She was the first female to win The Telegraph's Selby Buck Award for best high school athlete. Cliette played basketball and ran track at Florida State. She led the Seminoles as a freshman to their first ever NCAA tournament appearance and averaged 14.1 points and 10.8 rebounds in her two-year basketball career. She won four national championships in track, becoming a three-time All-American as a freshman. She went on to win gold medals in the World University Games, the Goodwill Games and the Pan Am Games. Cliette was an alternate in the 200 meters for the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. Cliette is in both the Macon Sports Hall of Fame and the Florida State Athletics Hall of Fame.

Why we picked her: How do you pick Cliette or Norm

SEE NUMBERS, 9C

Northeast product Brenda Cliette was a two-sport star at Florida State, playing basketball and running track for the Seminoles.

Florida State University

NUMBERS FROM 8C

Nixon? Nixon obviously went on to great heights in the NBA. Cliette, however, had a transcendent track career and was one — if not THE — best female basketball player in Bibb County history. Cliette probably stands alongside Olympian Martha Hudson Pennyman as the two best female athletes in Middle Georgia history.

Others to consider
Wanda Burns, Southwest, basketball: Burns played three outstanding seasons at Florida State. She led the team in scoring and steals as a junior and took the Seminoles to the NCAA tournament in 1990. As a senior, Burns averaged 18.5 points per game to lead the Metro Conference. She was named 1991 Metro Conference Player of the Year. Burns scored in double figures in 38 straight games and set a single-game record with 10 steals. She was inducted into the Florida State Athletics Hall of Fame in 2006.

Tasha Butts, Baldwin, basketball: Butts remains the all-time leading scorer in Baldwin history. She was the Gatorade Georgia Player of the Year as a senior, and her jersey is retired at the school. Butts played at Tennessee, helping her team to a 124-17 record in her four seasons. Butts was a second-team All-SEC pick in 2004 after averaging 10.4 points. She is among the school leaders in games played, 3-point shots made and free-throw percentage. She scored 37 points against Vanderbilt in 2004. Butts served as an assistant coach at Duquesne and UCLA, and she now coaches at LSU.

Reggie Manuel, Southwest, basketball: After an all-state high school career, Manuel played four seasons at UNLV. He scored 1,118 career points, including 17.2 per game in 1993-94. He made the Big West All-Freshman team in 1992 and the All-Big West first team in 1994. The Las Vegas Review-Journal ranked Manuel as the 40th best player in UNLV history.

Norm Nixon, Southwest, basketball: A very good basketball and football player at Southwest, Nixon really hit his mark beginning in college. Nixon averaged 21 and 22 points per game, respectively, during his junior and senior seasons at Duquesne. Among his other college records: fifth in career scoring, first in field goals made and first in career assists. Nixon's college jersey was retired in 2001. Nixon was a first round pick of the Los Angeles Lakers, playing six seasons with the team and winning two NBA titles. He led the NBA in steals in 1978-79 and led the league in assists with the Clippers in 1983-84. He averaged 20.4 points and 8.1 assists in the playoffs as the Lakers won the NBA title in 1982. Nixon made two NBA all-star teams, and he is a member of the Macon Sports and Georgia Sports Halls of Fame. He is probably more recognizable, however, for wearing No. 10 in college and in the pros.
James Outlaw, Ballard-Hudson, basketball: Outlaw was a Parade All-American in 1970 after averaging 34 points per game as a senior. He went on to play at North Carolina A&T, where he was a two-time All-MEAC player. He also holds the school's single-season scoring record.
Alfred Rawls, Wilcox County, football: Rawls rushed for 2,040 yards and 36 touchdowns in 1985 and was named Telegraph Player of the Year. Rawls earned two letters at Kentucky.



J.T. Thomas, Lanier, football

Bio: Thomas left Lanier to become the first black football player at Florida State. He made an immediate impact, blocking two field goals in his debut at Florida State, with the second sealing a two-point win over Louisville. Thomas set the Seminoles' school record with three interceptions in one game. He eventually landed on the first-team All-America lists for Pro Football Weekly and Time Magazine in 1972. The Pittsburgh Steelers selected Thomas with the 24th overall pick in the 1973 NFL draft. Thomas was a full-time starter for six seasons, playing in three Super Bowl victories for the Steelers. He had 20 career interceptions and played in the Pro Bowl in 1976. Thomas is a

Coming up in The Numbers Game

The Numbers Game continues throughout the summer:
Aug. 12: The 10s
Aug. 19: Single digits



To see even more athletes we considered, go to Jonathan Heeter's blog at macon.com/heetsblog.

member of both the Macon and Georgia Sports Halls of Fame.
Why we picked him: Picking between Thomas, Jeff Malone and Al Wood gave us ulcers. If The Telegraph ranked the top 25 athletes in Middle Georgia history, there is a good chance all three would make the cut. It's unfortunate that all three wore the same number in high school. Wood was fantastic, but he wore No. 30 in college and different numbers in the pros. Malone and Thomas wore No. 24 for most of their careers, and that can be a tiebreaker in a situation like this. At the end of the day, we picked Thomas because he's one of a select few men who can say they were members of the vaunted Steel Curtain defense, perhaps the greatest defensive unit in NFL history.

Others to consider
Gary Faulkner, Jones County, football: Faulkner rushed for 1,117 yards and 25 touchdowns as a during an all-state senior season at Jones County in 1968. Faulkner earned two letters at Georgia Tech, including starting at free safety in 1971.

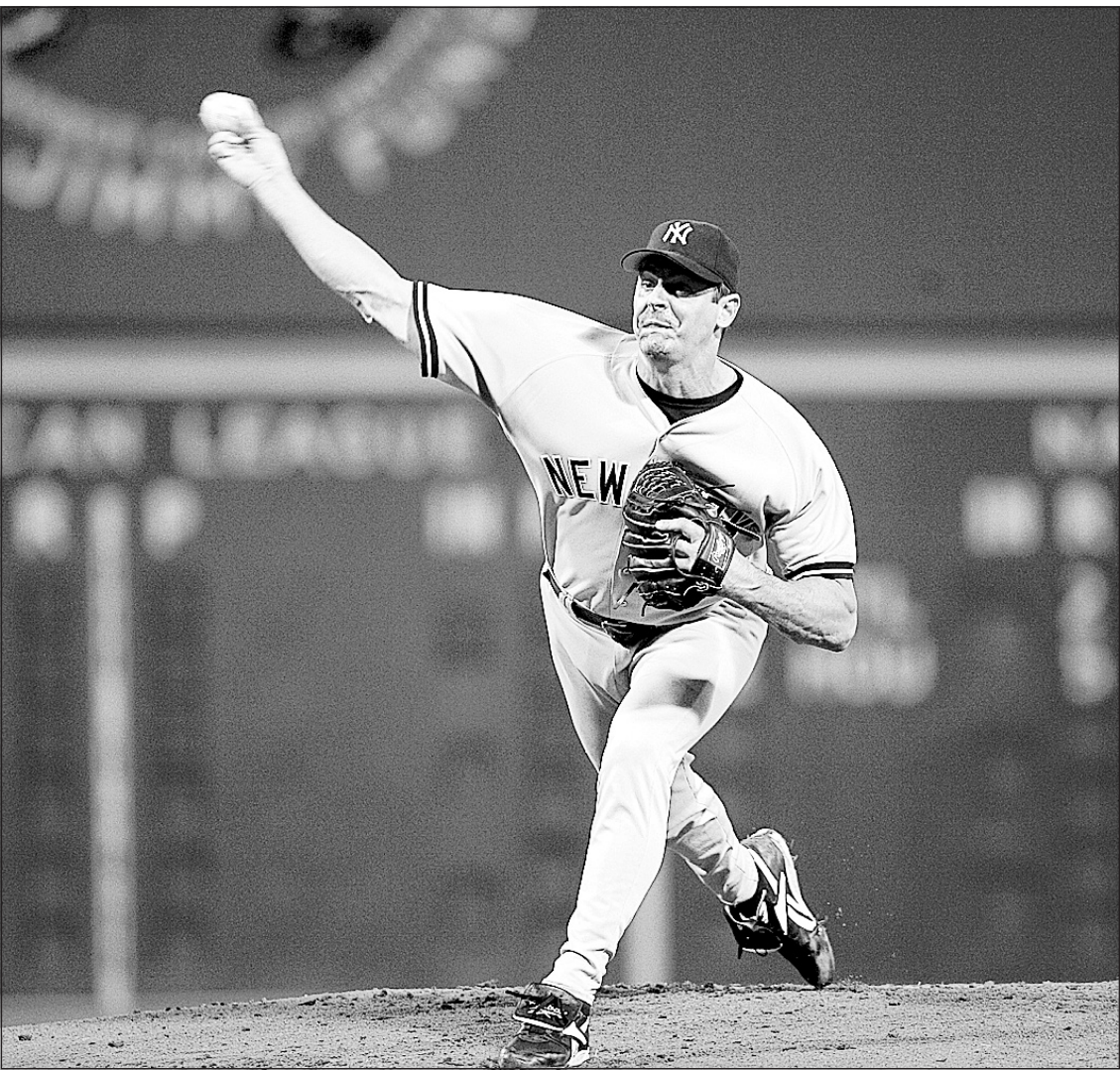
Willie Greene, Jones County, baseball: Greene hit .564 with 17 home runs and 55 RBI with 32 stolen bases as a senior in 1989. The Pittsburgh Pirates selected Greene with the 18th pick of the first round. He played for four different teams during a nine-year career. In his only full season as a starter, Greene hit 26 home runs and knocked in 91 runs with the Cincinnati Reds in 1997.

Joe Jones, R.E. Lee, football: One of the few four-year lettermen in Bear Bryant's tenure at Alabama, Jones played on two national championship teams at Alabama.

Jeff Malone, Southwest, basketball: Malone led the Patriots in scoring in 1979, the year the team won the state championship and mythical national title. Malone was outstanding in four years at Mississippi State, averaging 19.5 points per game in his career and 26.8 points per game as a senior in 1982-83. Malone, the school's all-time leading scorer, will be inducted into the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame in 2012, earning the same honor he has already received from the Macon and Georgia Sports Halls of Fame. Malone played 13 seasons in the NBA, making two All-Star teams with the Washington Bullets. He averaged 19 points per game for his career, with a high of 24.3 points in 1989-90. He averaged more than 20 points per game in six different NBA seasons.

Darius Marshall, Baldwin, football: Marshall made two all-state teams at Baldwin, rushing for nearly 4,500 combined yards to go with 58 touchdowns his final two seasons. Marshall rushed for 6,338 yards in his career, the highest total in Middle Georgia history. Marshall made the Conference USA All-Freshman team in 2007, and he rushed for 1,099 and 1,131 yards in his final two seasons at Marshall.

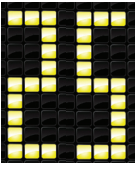
Al Wood, Jones County, basketball: One of the greatest basketball players in Middle Georgia history, Wood made a McDonald's All-American team after his all-state senior season in 1977. Wood averaged 17 points or more during his final three seasons at North Carolina. He is one of only six players in UNC history to score more than 2,000 points. He is tied for most points in school history in a NCAA Tournament game with 39. He had a string of 43 consecutive games scoring in double figures. Wood made All-ACC first teams in 1979 and 1981 and was a second-team AP All-America in 1981. Wood was the Atlanta Hawks' No. 4 pick in the 1981 NBA Draft. He played six years in the NBA, with his best year coming when he averaged 15 points per game with Seattle in 1984-85. He was also on the



PAUL J. BERESWILL/McClatchy-Tribune News Service

Wilkinson County's Kevin Brown became the first Georgia Tech baseball player to be named a first-team All-American before going on to a 19-year career in the majors. He became baseball's first \$100 million player.

Olympic basketball team in the U.S.-boycotted 1980 Moscow Olympics.



Isaac Jackson, Lanier, football

Bio: Jackson rushed for a then-Macon record 1,940 yards in 1968, adding 21 touchdowns on the ground. Jackson became a national recruiting sensation, drawing interest from across the country. Georgia head coach Vince Dooley recruited Jackson heavily, hoping to have Jackson become the first black player in school history. Jackson signed with South Carolina but ended up at Kansas State. Jackson had six 100-yard rushing games in 1973, all of which came in consecutive weeks. He held Kansas State's single-season (1,137 yards) and career rushing records (2,182 yards) for 18 years. His 1973 total of 1,137 is still the fifth best total in school history. Only two players have rushed for more in a year — Darren Sproles surpassed the number in three different seasons. The Cincinnati Bengals selected Jackson in the 10th round of the 1974 NFL draft.

Why we picked him: How many Middle Georgia athletes had a movie made about them? "See Isaac Run" became a hit when it aired on national television prior to Jackson's senior year at Lanier. Jackson surely is one of the most heavily recruited players in Macon history.

Others to consider
Charlie Anderson, Mark Smith, basketball: Anderson was the go-to player for the Bulldogs during their memorable run to the state championship in 1969. Anderson played at Georgia, averaging 14.4 points as a starter during the 1973-74 season.

Vince Faison, Toombs County, baseball/football: Faison was an All-Middle Georgia selection in two sports and was The Telegraph's Athlete of the Year in 1999. He was the 20th selection in the 1999 MLB draft by the San Diego Padres. Faison also played college football at Tennessee.

Lewis Linder, Southwest, basketball: Linder was one of the best players in the early days of the Southwest program. He went on to start three seasons at Kentucky State, averaging 20.3 points per game as a senior in 1975-76. The Boston Celtics selected Linder in the fourth round of the 1976 NBA draft.

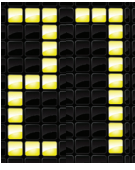


Clint Kent, Westside, football

Bio: Kent helped lead Westside to two of its best seasons in school history. The Seminoles played in the semifinals and quarterfinals, respectively, during Kent's final two seasons. Kent earned All-Middle Georgia and all-state honors and was named The Telegraph's Player of the Year in Macon in 2001. Kent played at James Madison, where he played on the Dukes' 2004

national championship team. Kent has the school record for career interceptions with 13. He earned All-Atlantic 10 Conference honors in 2005.

Why we picked him: In addition to his solid high school and college careers, Kent has played in 57 CFL games. He was Winnipeg's captain in 2011. Kent is injured right now, but he played in the first three games of the 2012 season for the Edmonton Eskimos. He returned a fumble for a touchdown earlier this season. Kent also played in the af2 and in Finland.



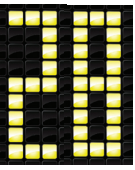
Kevin Brown, Wilkinson County, baseball

Bio: Brown was a bit of an unknown coming out of Wilkinson County, but he sure made his mark at Georgia Tech. He became the first player in Georgia Tech history to earn first-team All-America honors when he did so in 1986. The Texas Rangers selected Brown with the fourth overall pick in 1986. Brown was inducted into the Georgia Tech Hall of Fame in 1991. Brown pitched 19 seasons in the major leagues, making six All-Star teams and leading the Florida Marlins to a World Series championship in 1997. Brown also pitched for the San Diego Padres in the 1998 World Series. Brown won 211 career games and had 2,397 strikeouts to go with a 3.28 career ERA. Brown led the AL in wins in 1992 and led the NL in ERA in 1996 and 2000. He finished in the top three in Cy Young Award voting twice. Brown is in the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame.

Why we picked him: Brown had a few strong seasons with the Rangers, but few pitchers in baseball were better than him between 1996 (his first year with the Marlins) and 2003 (his final season with the Los Angeles Dodgers). Very few Middle Georgians made an impact in the pro ranks like Brown.

Others to consider
Lafayette King, Lanier, football: The outstanding multi-sport athlete went on to play football and baseball at Georgia. The Los Angeles Rams selected King with the 60th overall pick in the 1946 NFL Draft.

Pierce Staples, Perry, football: One of the first All-Middle Georgia players of the year, Staples signed with Georgia following the 1959 football season.



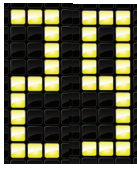
Lauren Hargrove, Fitzgerald, football

Bio: Hargrove scored two touchdowns and kicked the winning extra point in the 1948 Class A championship game against Decatur. He scored 463 career points in high school. Hargrove went to Georgia, where he earned the nickname "The Fabulous Phantom of Fitzgerald." Hargrove learned three letters as a tailback at Georgia. Although

Hargrove battled injuries at Georgia, he managed to run for 167 yards in the first half against Auburn in 1951. The Green Bay Packers selected Hargrove in the 1953 NFL draft.

Why we picked him: Hargrove is one of those high school legends that Georgians love. His achievements are still talked about on Friday nights in Fitzgerald because of the impact he had on his school and his community. It doesn't hurt that he was a pretty good college player, as well.

Others to consider
Bernard Ford, Crisp County, football: Ford went on to stardom at Central Florida, where he earned All-America status in 1987 after catching 82 passes for 1,403 yards. Ford still ranks in the UCF record books in career receiving yardage and receiving touchdowns. He was inducted into the UCF Hall of Fame in 2011. The Buffalo Bills drafted Ford in the third round of the 1988 NFL draft. Ford played for the Houston Oilers and Dallas Cowboys.
Luke Crowell, Peach County, football: Crowell landed on the all-state team in 2009 thanks to the versatility that helped the Trojans win the state championship. He rushed for 21 touchdowns along with making the pass breakup with no time remaining to seal the state title win over Gainesville.



Ben Smith, Warner Robins, football

Bio: Smith broke onto the scene in 1985 when he was named Class AAAA Defensive Player of the Year as a senior. He went on to Georgia, where he started three seasons in the defensive backfield. He played on three bowl teams at Georgia, earning All-SEC first-team honors in 1989 and second-team All-SEC honors a year earlier as a junior. The Philadelphia Eagles selected Smith with the 22nd pick of the first round of the 1990 NFL draft. Smith played seven seasons in the NFL, collecting six career interceptions in stints with the Philadelphia Eagles, Denver Broncos and Arizona Cardinals. He started 40 of his 57 career games.

Why we picked him: Smith was one of three Demons to earn defensive player of the year honors in the 1980s along with Steve Boswell and Anthony Abrams, and he's one of the school's five selections for that honor ever. Smith is probably the best defensive back to ever suit up for the Demons.



Auburn University

James Brooks led Warner Robins to a state title before enjoying successful collegiate and professional careers.



Bill Shanks

Lots of good can be found in loss

The Atlanta Falcons lost their first preseason game Thursday night. Losing is never fun, but in the exhibition season you must look a bit deeper to find out what really happened.

It's a small sample size, but if you watched the game, particularly the first quarter, you know Atlanta's first-team offense and defense did well. In fact, they did well enough to make you feel pretty good about what we might see in the regular season.

The defense stood out, and if you did not know the Falcons had a new defensive coordinator, you would have been able to tell by watching the players play. Not one player stood out, but there was a different look to the defense, and it had nothing to do with scheme.

There was an aggressiveness that has been needed for a long time. New coordinator Mike Nolan is more known for running a 3-4 defense, but going to that completely would scrap what head coach Mike Smith has had in place since he took the job. Instead, it was obvious Nolan is looking to be creative to take advantage of the personnel.

There's no doubt the middle linebacker situation is an issue. Akeem Dent got hurt playing special teams, and he might miss the valuable time he needs to acclimate himself as the replacement for Curtis Lofton. The Falcons need to bring in another veteran, since Mike Peterson mainly has played on the outside, and we still don't know if Dent will be good or not.

But at first glance, Nolan's defense looks more like a NFL defense, compared to what we've seen with Brian VanGorder at the helm the past four years.

Offensively, there's still a lot to figure out. Now that draft pick Bradie Ewing is out for the season with a knee injury, the Falcons must bring in someone to help out Mike Cox at fullback. It's a shame they released Ovie Mughelli, who had been the starter for the past five years but was released after Ewing was drafted out of Wisconsin.

The offensive line still must show more, and I am not certain Garrett Reynolds is the answer at guard. He looked better than he did last season, but perhaps I just can't convince myself that someone who looks like a tackle can play guard.

SEE SHANKS, 6C

THE GAME CONTINUES...

The 10s. Pages 8-9C.



BEAU CABELL/bcabell@macon.com

Georgia offensive linemen Kolton Houston, left, and John Theus collide during drills at a recent Bulldogs practice.

Sticking to the plan

As expected, Theus emerging for Georgia

By SETH EMERSON
semerson@macon.com

ATHENS — The plan is on a parallel track. It is well-devised, and so far being perfectly executed. The object of this plan is John Theus.

The first part of the plan is to make clear to Theus that he has to earn his starting spot, that just because he was a five-star recruit, with all the hype attached to him, that he wouldn't automati-

cally play.

The second part of the plan is, in fact, to play him.

Because when you're the Georgia football program, and your offensive line is perhaps the team's top concern entering 2012, you don't keep a player like Theus on your bench.



ALSO
■ Georgia notebook, 6C

You can see the plan in action with these types of comments from offensive line coach Will Friend: "He's a good player. He's got a long way to go though."

Merely a "good" football player? According to the recruiting hype, Friend is under-selling it.

Theus is one of the most accomplished offensive line recruits to enter the program

SEE GEORGIA, 6C



BEAU CABELL/bcabell@macon.com

Georgia offensive linemen Kolton Houston (75) and John Theus (71) compare notes during drills at a recent practice.

McIlroy, Singh tied for lead in rain-delayed PGA

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

KIAWAH ISLAND, S.C. — First came the black cloud that has been following Tiger Woods on the weekend at the majors. The real storm arrived a short time later Saturday in the PGA Championship, halting the brilliant start by Rory McIlroy and giving Woods a chance to stop his slide at Kiawah Island.

McIlroy opened with three birdies and two par saves, none bigger than on the third hole when his tee shot lodged

in the crevice of a branch about 7 feet off the ground. He reached up to remove the ball, took a penalty drop and made a 6-foot par putt to continue on his way.

It all looked so easy for McIlroy, who was at 6 under through nine holes and tied for the lead with Vijay Singh when the third round was suspended.

For Woods, it was a grind on another windswept day at Kiawah Island.

He failed to birdie the par-5 second hole and then badly missed a 4-foot birdie putt on the next hole. He hit a spectator with a fairway metal off the tee at the fourth, pulled a shot into the



EVAN VUCCI/Associated Press

Rory McIlroy opened his third round at the PGA Championship with three birdies in his first five holes.

mounds short of the par-5 fifth hole and made yet another bogey on the par-5 seventh with two poor shots to

SEE PGA, 3C

Santana chased early as Braves rout Mets

By MIKE FITZPATRICK
AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK — Freddie Freeman had five RBI in the first two innings and the Atlanta Braves battered Johan Santana in his return from the disabled list, routing the slug-

Next: at Mets, 8:05 p.m., Sunday (ESPN)



gish New York Mets 9-3 on Saturday night.

Michael Bourn had three hits, Chipper Jones chased Santana with an RBI single in a seven-run second inning and Atlanta sent the two-time Cy Young Award winner to the worst start of his career.

Kris Medlen (3-1) pitched effectively into the seventh inning, striking out seven while improving to 2-0 since joining the rotation. A solid reliever most of the season, he has permitted one run in each of his three starts.

Santana (6-8) got only four outs. He was charged with eight hits and a season-high eight runs in his first outing since July 20.



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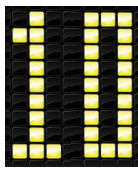
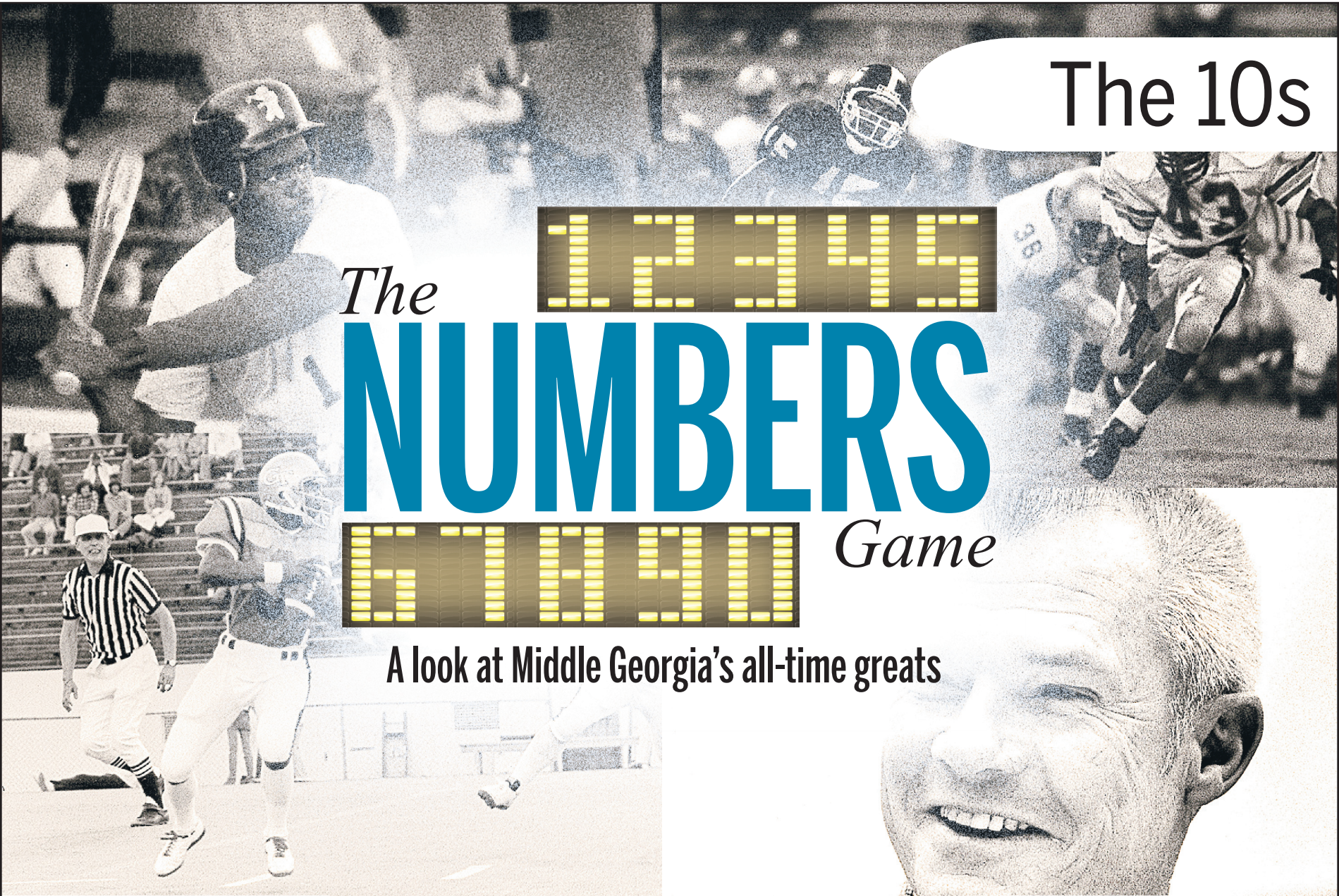
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Bobby Bryant, Willingham, football/baseball

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Go to macon.com for more photos of the players who were chosen, as well as Jonathan Heeter's podcast.

He was drafted by the New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox, but he spurned those offers to play for the Minnesota Vikings. Bryant played 14 seasons for the Vikings, making two Pro Bowl teams. He led the NFC in interceptions in 1973, and he is second on the Vikings' career interceptions list with 51. Bryant played on all four of the Vikings' Super Bowl teams in the 1970s and played on 11 NFC Central Division championship teams. Bryant is in the following Halls of Fame: Macon Sports, Georgia Sports, South Carolina Sports and University of South Carolina Sports.

Why we picked him: Bryant is probably the greatest athlete to come out of Willingham. He also is one of the best pound-for-pound athletes in Middle Georgia history.

Others to consider

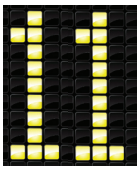
A.J. Bryant, Peach County, football: Bryant was the Class AAA Offensive Player of the Year in 2003 after leading the Trojans to the state championship game. Bryant moved to wide receiver at Georgia, and he caught a touchdown pass against West Virginia in the Sugar Bowl.

Ken Bonifay, Lanier, football/baseball: Bonifay made the all-state team in 1963 before earning three letters at Georgia Tech in football. Bonifay also played baseball at Georgia Tech, leading the Yellow Jackets in home runs in 1966.

Bryan Ellis, Peach County, football: Ellis played just one season at Peach County, but he sure made it count. He passed for 3,600 yards and 31 touchdowns to lead Peach County to the 2006 state championship. Ellis, who was the Class AAA Offensive Player of the Year and The Telegraph's All-Middle Georgia Player of the Year in 2006, played three seasons at UAB. He passed for 2,940 yards and 25 touchdowns as a junior.

Johnny Henderson, Mount de Sales, football: Henderson led Mount de Sales to five total state championships in football and baseball. He made three all-state teams in football while posting close to a .500 batting average in baseball. The Chicago Cubs

drafted Henderson in the third round in 1974, but he choose to play baseball and football at Georgia. Henderson had four interceptions in one game during his three years as a starting defensive back in Athens. Henderson spent some time in camp with the Baltimore Colts and Kansas City Chiefs following college.



Mike Jolly, Central, football

Bio: Two years after Steve Dennis electrified Bibb County football fans, Jolly stepped under center for the Chargers and led the team on a magical run to a state championship in 1975, the first in Bibb County since 1948. He was unstoppable for much of his senior season, but Jolly's postseason performance made him legendary. He picked up a long fourth down on the game-winning drive to beat Northside in the quarterfinals just two weeks after the Eagles beat Central by 13. In the championship game, Jolly led his team on a 76-yard touchdown drive, scoring on a 1-yard touchdown with 1:23 left to beat Douglass. Jolly went on to play at Georgia Tech and Tennessee State, and he spent some time with the Memphis Showboats in the USFL.

Why we picked him: Who has had a

bigger impact on the football field in Bibb County since integration than Jolly? Probably no one. His performance during the 1975 season looms even larger now considering it has been 37 years since a Bibb County program has won a state title. When Jolly's Central teammate Roger Jackson played for the Denver Broncos, he said he used to tell John Elway, "You remind me of Michael Jolly."

Others to consider

Michael Brooker, Brentwood, basketball: Arguably the greatest basketball player in GISA history, Brooker made close to 40 percent of his 3-point shots in high school. He made national headlines when he made 87 consecutive free throws to set the national record. Brooker averaged 33.7 points and 10.5 rebounds as a high school senior. He holds program records in single-game points (52) and career points (2,501). Brooker went on letter four seasons for North Carolina. He now serves as the head coach at FPD.

Terry Brown, Southwest, football: Brown was a do-everything quarterback for the Patriots before earning four letters at Tennessee.

Jay Cranford, Stratford, baseball: Cranford was a part of four no-hitters at Stratford. He hit 13 home runs in 1988, and he holds the school's record for career pitching wins. He

went 36-3 on the mound. Cranford was drafted twice, the final time by the Pittsburgh Pirates in 1992. He also played at Georgia.

Vince Datillo, Mount de Sales, soccer: Datillo was a four-time Telegraph All-Middle Georgia soccer player of the year before playing at Mercer, where he was the A-Sun Player of the Year in 1992. He was the fourth overall pick by the Dayton Dynamos in the 1993 National Professional Soccer League.

Ed DeFore Jr., Lanier, baseball: DeFore went 15-2 on the mound as a senior before signing with Georgia. He was drafted twice, signing with the New York Mets after they drafted him 12th overall in 1971.

Darius Dewberry, Peach County, football: Dewberry was a wrecking ball on defense for the Trojans during an all-state year in 2004. Dewberry earned four letters at Georgia.

Moses Herring, Ballard-Hudson, football: Herring might have been the first great black quarterback in Macon. He led Ballard-Hudson to a state championship in 1959. It was the school's only undefeated season.

Marques Ivory, Northside, football: Ivory never lost a high school game as a starting quarterback, leading the Eagles to state titles in 2006 and 2007. His most memorable game came at the Georgia Dome in 2007, returning at halftime of the state semifinals to help Northside to come back from a 28-7 deficit. Ivory had missed the previous six games with a broken leg. Ivory plays quarterback at Jacksonville State.

Morgan Johnson, FPD, softball/basketball/track: Johnson played key roles in state championship runs in all three sports she played. She holds FPD's career home run record. Johnson started in the outfielder during Valdosta State's run to a national championship in 2012. Johnson won the Gulf South Conference Commissioner's Trophy as the conference's top female athlete after hitting .427 with 11 home runs and 51 RBI.

Walter Johnson, Appling, basketball: Johnson may be the best player in Appling history, and he had a standout career at Fort Valley State.

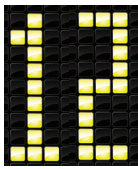
Larry Lawrence, Mount de Sales, basketball: An all-state high school player, Lawrence played at Dartmouth, where he made the All-Ivy League team in 1979 and 1981. He scored 1,000 career points and was named the Ivy League Player of the Year in 1981. Lawrence was drafted by the Atlanta Hawks, but he became famous playing in France. He averaged 32.4 points in 1989 with a French team.

Tommy Reid, Willingham, baseball/basketball: Reid was a standout baseball and basketball player with the

Rams. He led Georgia in hitting in 1964 and made the All-SEC team in 1965. He later won the Georgia Senior Amateur in 2001.

Justin Tyler, Jones County, baseball/football: Tyler was a tremendous two-sport athlete for the Greyhounds. Tyler hit more than 30 home runs during his final two seasons at Jones County. He played college football at Mississippi State before playing at Arkansas-Monticello.

Chris Wilson, FPD, football: Wilson rushed for 4,442 yards and 53 touchdowns at FPD. The all-state pick played at Georgia Southern and is a member of the Macon Sports Hall of Fame.



Billy Henderson, Lanier, baseball/football

Bio: Lanier's two-time all-state running back made two All-Southern teams, including being named as the top player in Georgia in 1945. Henderson set the Macon touchdown record as a senior — the mark stood for 28 years until Steve Dennis broke it. Henderson was just as solid in baseball, playing in a national showcase at Yankee Stadium for Babe Ruth against a team coached by Ty Cobb. After being drafted by the Chicago Cubs, Henderson decided to head to Georgia, where he earned eight combined letters in football and baseball. He was a two-time All-SEC pick in baseball, leading Georgia in batting three times. He still holds the career record for steals with 91, and only two players in the past 62 years have stolen more bases in a season than Henderson's 29 in 1950. Henderson led the SEC in hitting twice, and his .375 career average is sixth best in Georgia history. Henderson returned to Macon to coach at Willingham and Mount de Sales. He later won three state championships at Clarke Central.

Why we picked him: This was such a difficult choice between two of the greatest high school athletes in Middle Georgia history in Henderson and Chansi Stuckey. Stuckey might be one of the five best players who didn't make the cut at their number, alongside players like Norm Nixon, Jeff Malone, Al Wood and Roger Kingdom. It's hard to compare players from completely different eras, and it's also easier to pick the player who's fresher on the mind. But Henderson is still one of the greatest baseball players in Georgia history, and he's one of the best high school football players in state history. He rushed for more than 20 touchdowns in a season back

Billy Henderson was a four-time letter winner in both football and baseball at Georgia, where he still holds the career steals record.

University of Georgia

NUMBERS FROM 8C

when it was very difficult to accomplish the feat with fewer games. The state's reverence for Henderson was apparent when he was inducted into the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame in 1962 as a 34-year-old, just 16 years after his final high school game.

Others to consider

Rodney Collins, Hawkinsville, football: Collins was the state back of the year in 1965. He has become more known for his coaching exploits, winning four state championships as a head coach with three coming at Stratford, where he currently coaches.

Rashad Eldridge, FPD, baseball: Eldridge holds FPD's school record for batting average. He signed with Georgia but signed a pro contract with the Cleveland Indians in 2000. Eldridge spent 11 seasons in the minor leagues, collecting 1,041 career hits with a .270 career average.

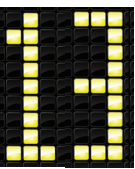
Charles Harris, Mount de Sales, basketball: Harris was an all-state basketball player for the Cavaliers, making the GHSA all-star game in 1977 and playing in the Boston Shoot-Out. He played four years at Iowa State, finishing his career third all-time in assists for the Cyclones.

Scooter Melvin, Fort Valley, basketball/football: Melvin won back-to-back Class C Back of the Year awards in 1952 and 1953. He was The Telegraph's first All-Middle Georgia Player of the Year in 1953 after scoring 303 career points.

Billy Powell, Perry, basketball: Powell helped lead Perry to the 1953 state title. He averaged 20 points per game and scored 28 in the state title win over Clarkston. Powell was named captain of the all-state team.

Chansi Stuckey, Northside, football: He made two all-state teams, but it was during his senior year when Stuckey made his mark. The quarterback earned Class AAAAA Offensive Player of the Year in 2001 after leading the Eagles to their first state championship game. The Eagles lost that night to Parkview, but the road was paved to the eventual state championship five years later. Stuckey was also one of the first spread quarterbacks in Georgia. Stuckey moved to wide receiver as a sophomore at Clemson, and he excelled with a combined 1,470 yards and seven touchdowns his final two seasons. He was selected in the seventh round of the 2007 NFL draft. Stuckey has played for the New York Jets, Cleveland and Arizona the past five seasons. He has 1,062 career yards and five touchdowns.

Al Thornton, Perry, basketball: Thornton exploded his final two seasons at Florida State, averaging 16.1 points and 19.7 points, respectively. The Los Angeles Clippers took Thornton with the 14th overall pick in the 2007 NBA draft. Thornton has started 167 games in four NBA seasons, averaging 11.9 points for his career. He averaged a career best 16.8 points in 2008-09.



Blue Moon Odom, Ballard-Hudson, baseball

Bio: Odom dominated in high school, leading Ballard-Hudson to consecutive state championships while going 42-2 with eight no-hitters. The Kansas City Athletics drafted Odom in 1964, and he stuck in the major leagues for 13 years. Odom made all-star teams in 1968 and 1969, which were two of his three seasons with 15 or more wins. While he had a roughly .500 record for his career, Odom came up big on the biggest stage. He had a 1.13 ERA in five playoff and six World Series appearances. He threw a complete game, three-hit shutout to beat the Tigers in the 1972 ALCS, and he finished the series with a 0.00 ERA in 14 innings. He had a 1.59 ERA in 11 innings in the 1972 World Series. He played on all three of the Oakland A's championship teams in the 1970s. Odom was also a very good hitter, knocking five home runs and hitting .266 in 1969. Odom was inducted into the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame in 2004.

Why we picked him: Odom joins a very select company of Middle Georgians with multiple world championships, joining J.T. Thomas (Lanier-Pittsburgh

Coming up in The Numbers Game

The Numbers Game concludes Aug. 19 with the single digits.



To see even more athletes we considered, go to Jonathan Heeter's blog at macon.com/heetsblog.

Steelers) and Norm Nixon (Southwest-Los Angeles Lakers) among a few others on the list.

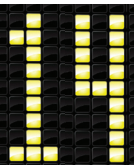
Others to consider

Stewart Bloodworth, Perry, football: One of the first All-Middle Georgia Players of the Year, Bloodworth rushed for 1,285 yards and 10 touchdowns in 1957.

Dwayne Powell, Perry, basketball: Powell led the Panthers to consecutive state championships in 1962 and 1963. Powell averaged 18 points per game in 1962 and a school record 29.9 points per game as a senior. He made 50 straight free throws during one stretch and finished as Perry's all-time leading scorer with 2,043 points. Powell went on to play at Georgia.

Theron Sapp, Lanier, football: Sapp became best known as Georgia's "drought breaker" after his touchdown broke Georgia Tech's eight-win winning streak against the Bulldogs in 1957. How big was that touchdown? Georgia retired his college No. 40 two months after his final college game. He was a second-team All-SEC pick in 1958. Sapp played five seasons with the Philadelphia Eagles — including on the 1960 NFL championship team — and three years with the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Inman Veal, Lanier, baseball/ basketball: The man known as "Coot" was an all-state baseball and basketball player in high school. Veal played basketball and baseball at Auburn, making an All-SEC baseball team in 1952. Veal played six years in the major leagues, mostly as a utility player and defensive replacement. Veal was the first player to bat for the second incarnation of the Washington Senators, the team that eventually became the Texas Rangers.



Rondell White, Jones County, baseball

Bio: White helped lead Jones County to the 1989 state championship — the only one in program history — and eventually earned national recognition as a senior in 1990. The Montreal Expos selected White with the 24th overall selection in the 1990 draft. He made his debut in 1993 and became a full-time player in 1995. He remained in the big leagues until 2007, finishing his career with his seventh team, the Minnesota Twins. White hit 198 home runs and knocked in 768 RBI while hitting .284 for his career. He made his only all-star team in 2003. White hit a career-best 28 home runs with the Expos in 1997, giving him his first of three 20-plus home run seasons.

Why we picked him: Competition at No. 14 was stiff, with Steve Dennis and Nick Marshall being two of the great quarterbacks in Middle Georgia history. Burnette and Cranford had outstanding careers. But White is one of the most noteworthy athletes in Middle Georgia history, and he might stand alongside Al Wood as the greatest athletes in Jones County history.

Others to consider

Dantonio Burnette, Northside, football: Burnette was one of the key players to put Northside football on the map after head coach Conrad Nix returned for his second stint. Burnette wreaked havoc at N.C. State, earning the moniker "Thunder Dan" for his ferocity. He ranks among the top 10 in school history in tackles, tackles for loss and forced fumbles.

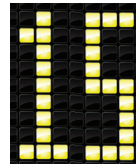
Joannie Cavan, R.E. Lee, basketball: Cavan averaged 24 points per game in her final two years, leading the team to a 59-1 mark in that span. Cavan led the team to an undefeated season and a state championship in 1962.

Joey Cranford, Stratford,

baseball/football: Cranford is third in single-season and career batting averages for the Eagles. Cranford hit 11 home runs and knocked in 51 runs to go with an 11-0 record on the mound to lead the Eagles to the GISA title in 1994. Cranford went 25-3 in his career on the mound. He was drafted twice, the second time by the Minnesota Twins in 1996 after he played two years for Georgia.

Steve Dennis, Central, football: Dennis broke Billy Henderson's single-season city touchdown record in 1973. He was named Class AAA Back of the Year as a senior, and he was The Telegraph's Player of the Year. Dennis played at Georgia, serving as team captain in 1978. Dennis coached at Auburn and Georgia before serving as Troy's athletics director from 2005 until late July 2012.

Nick Marshall, Wilcox County, basketball/football: Marshall led Wilcox County to its first state football championship in 2009. He went on to shatter the state's career passing touchdown record with 103, 11 clear of the second player on the list. Marshall also took the Patriots' basketball team to two Final Fours. He was The Telegraph's Selby Buck winner in 2010, and he was separately The Telegraph's football player of the year and basketball player of the year twice. Marshall played one season of football at Georgia, and he currently plays at Garden City Community College.



Jacquez Green, Peach County, football

Bio: Green earned all-state honors as a senior for Peach County, but his career really took off in the pass-happy offense at Florida. Green caught seven passes for 79 yards in Florida's Sugar Bowl win over Florida State in 2007 to clinch a national championship. Green finished the year with 33 catches for 626 yards and nine touchdowns. Green topped himself as a junior, when he caught 61 passes for 1,024 yards and nine touchdowns in 1997. Green earned consensus All-America and All-SEC honors in 1997, and he also was a finalist for the Fred Biletnikoff Award, which went to Randy Moss. The Tampa Bay Buccaneers selected Green in the second round of the 1998 NFL draft. He played five seasons in the NFL, with his best year coming when he caught 56 passes for 791 yards and three touchdowns in 1999.

Why we picked him: Although his NFL career didn't quite measure up to his college career, Green still has one of the most impressive pro football résumés for a Middle Georgia player. The only reason his pro career didn't match the college one is because his college run was so good.

Others to consider

Walter Daniels, Southwest, basketball: Daniels followed his high school career with an outstanding run at Georgia. Daniels averaged more than 10 points in each of his four seasons, including 16.4 and 21.9 points per game in his junior and senior seasons. Daniels finished his career at Georgia as the all-time leader in scoring and assists and made three All-SEC teams. The Los Angeles Lakers selected Daniels in the third round of the 1979 NBA draft.

Allisha Gray, Washington County, basketball: Gray already has won a state championship as a player, and she is a two-time All-Middle Georgia Player of the Year. Gray was named Gatorade's Georgia Player of the Year in 2012, and she played for USA Basketball's under-18 national team. Gray has committed to North Carolina.

Chris Hatcher, Mount de Sales, football: Hatcher rose from the bottom of the depth chart as a freshman quarterback at Valdosta State to become one of the greatest players in NCAA Division II history. He passed for 11,363 yards and 121 touchdowns at Valdosta State, making two All-America teams and winning the Harlan Hill Trophy in 1994 as Division II's best player. Hatcher returned to coach Valdosta State to the 2004 Division II championship. Hatcher is in the following Halls of Fame: Macon Sports, Valdosta State Athletic, Mount de Sales Athletic and Division II.

Chuck Hawkins, Crawford County, basketball: Hawkins

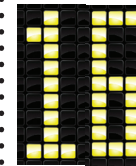
helped lead Crawford County to its first state championship in 1969.

Bobby Huellemeier, Mount de Sales, baseball: Huellemeier was the Cavaliers' ace on the mound during their run to the 1966 state championship. He struck out 16 in the championship game. In the 1967 region tournament, Huellemeier didn't allow a hit while striking out 31. He was drafted by the Los Angeles Dodgers in 1967, but he went on to play college baseball at Mercer.

Mike Mimbs, Windsor, baseball: After standout careers at Windsor and Mercer, Mimbs was selected by the Los Angeles Dodgers in the 1990 draft. He broke into the big leagues with the Philadelphia Phillies in 1995, and he started 37 games for the Phillies during the next three years.

Danny Minor, Lanier, football: Poets' head coach Selby Buck said Minor was the best back in the previous 30 years after Minor rushed for 1,027 yards in 1955.

Anthony Sessions, Northside, football: Sessions played quarterback for the Eagles, making an AP all-state team in 1996. Sessions went on to letter two seasons as a linebacker at Tennessee. He spent some time in camp with the Washington Redskins.



Cam Bonifay, Mark Smith, baseball/ football

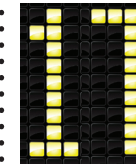
Bio: Bonifay made the key basket to clinch the 1969 state basketball title for Mark Smith, but he played baseball and football at Georgia Tech. Bonifay kicked for the Yellow Jackets while making earning honorable mention All-America honors in baseball. Bonifay was inducted in the Georgia Tech and Macon Sports halls of fame. After a brief minor league career, Bonifay went into the front office and became general manager of the Pittsburgh Pirates. He currently works in the Cincinnati Reds organization.

Others to consider

Nate Hybl, Jeff Davis, football: Hybl made two all-state teams in high school before signing with Georgia. He transferred to Oklahoma, where he served as a backup during the Sooners' national championship run in 2000. Hybl started his junior and senior seasons, passing for 2,538 yards and 24 touchdowns with just eight interceptions as a senior in 2002. Hybl spent time with both the Cleveland Browns and the Jacksonville Jaguars.

Brett Layson, Tattnall Square, football/track: Layson was a scoring machine for the Trojans in 2006. The quarterback scored a school-record 36 touchdowns and accounted for 46 total touchdowns and 1,826 yards as the Trojans won the GISA championship. He scored 60 career touchdowns. Layson didn't lose a hurdles race as a senior on the way to being named The Telegraph's track and field athlete of the year. He also won the Selby Buck Award as the Telegraph's top athlete in Middle Georgia. He was the City Player of the Year in football in 2006. Layson played college football at Georgia Southern.

Ryan Taylor, Dublin, football: Taylor was named the Class AAA Defensive Player of the Year as a senior in 1994. Taylor went on to letter four years at Auburn. He spent some time with the Cleveland Browns following his collegiate career.



Mallon Faircloth, Crisp County, football

Bio: Faircloth made two all-state teams in high school, capped by his selection as Class AA Back of the Year in 1959. Faircloth went on to be the final single-wing tailback in Tennessee history, rushing for 179 yards and a touchdown against Vanderbilt in his final collegiate game in 1963. Faircloth led the Volunteers in rushing twice and in total yards three times.

Why we picked him: Of the No. 17s we considered, Faircloth had the best combination of high school and collegiate careers.

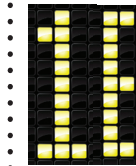
Others to consider

Mark Farriba, Stratford, baseball/football: Farriba starred in football and baseball at Stratford. He wore No. 17 in baseball. Farriba arguably had the

most dominant pitching season in GISA history in 1974, when he didn't allow an earned run in 45 innings while throwing three no-hitters. He tossed four no-hitters in his career to go with a 17-1 record. Farriba went on to punt at Georgia, and he is currently the head football coach at Prince Avenue Christian.

Gene Ratliff, Dudley Hughes, baseball: Ratliff followed a standout high school career by being selected by Houston in the MLB draft.

Brandon Spillers, Tattnall Square, baseball: Spillers led Tattnall Square to a 31-0 record and the GISA baseball championship in 2000. He went 8-0 with a 0.97 ERA during his senior season while hitting .417 with eight home runs. The Baltimore Orioles selected Spillers in the sixth round of the 2000 draft, and he spent six seasons with the organization.



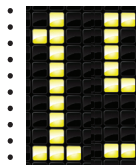
Mark Johnson, Warner Robins, baseball/ football

Bio: Johnson was a dominant hitter in high school at Warner Robins, getting drafted 26th overall by the Chicago White Sox in 1994. Johnson made his major league debut four years later in 1998. Johnson played five seasons for the White Sox. He played in limited action with the Oakland Athletics in 2003 and the Milwaukee Brewers in 2004. After a four-year absence in the major leagues, Johnson was called up by the St. Louis Cardinals in September 2008. Johnson became manager of the Chicago Cubs' short-season rookie club in Boise in 2011.

Why we picked him: Johnson was a pretty solid two-sport athlete at Warner Robins. While he was a solid quarterback, Johnson was an outstanding high school catcher, and he remains one of the few Middle Georgians to be selected in the first round of the baseball draft.

Others to consider

Marlon White, Westside, football: White set all of the receiving records at Westside, finishing his career with 1,487 receiving yards and 14 touchdowns. White earned four letters at Vanderbilt.



Louis Ivory, Peach County, football

Bio: Ivory exploded on to the scene as a running back at Furman. In 2000, Ivory rushed for 2,079 yards and 16 touchdowns and won the Walter Payton Award as the best player in Division I-AA. He followed that with 1,719 yards and 19 touchdowns as a senior. Ivory, who was spurned by Georgia Southern coming out of Peach County, rushed for 5,353 yards and 53 touchdowns during his career. He rushed for 301 yards and three touchdowns in an upset over top-ranked Georgia Southern in 2000. Ivory was named South Carolina College Player of the Decade — this was for all schools in South Carolina besides Clemson and South Carolina — by The State (Columbia, S.C.). He was a two-time consensus All-American and a two-time Southern Conference Player of the Year. Ivory's number (he wore 34 in college) is one of three retired jerseys at Furman.

Why we picked him: Ivory wasn't the best back in Peach County history, nor was he the biggest. But he had a ton of heart, becoming the only Middle Georgian to win the Walter Payton Award.

Others to consider

Josh Gordy, Washington County, football: Gordy's all-state senior season was punctuated by a 100-yard interception return for a touchdown in the state semifinals in the Georgia Dome in 2004. Gordy replicated the feat as a freshman for Central Michigan in 2006. Gordy had 10 career interceptions in college. He started 45 games at Central Michigan, making the All-MAC second team in 2009. Gordy played for the St. Louis Rams in 2011, starting nine games and intercepting three passes.

Brian Mimbs, Dublin, football: Mimbs was a two-time All-Middle Georgia selection at punter for Dublin. A two-year starter at Georgia, Mimbs made the All-SEC second team in 2008.



Bill Shanks

Watching
a special
season

Chipper Jones is the eighth oldest player in baseball this season. The seven older players are mainly middle relievers (like Jose Contreras) and bench players (like Jason Giambi). Some might even be older than they claim, but for Jones, you have to wonder if he's younger than what is actually listed on his birth certificate.

You just don't see starting position players do what Jones is doing at 40 years old. And you certainly don't see starting third basemen do what Jones is doing at 40 years old.

Earlier this year everyone predicted what Jones would do in his final season. The expectations had to be realistic, particularly for a player who hit a combined .268 in his previous three seasons.

It was almost polite to assume a lifetime .300-hitter could maybe reach the .275 mark with this average. You would have hoped the energy and adrenaline of being in his final season would push Jones to put up decent numbers.

But no one could have expected this. You could argue that Jones is an MVP candidate — not just for the Braves, but for the NL. He won't win it, but he better get some votes.

There were signs in spring training Jones might have trouble making it through May. His bat speed looked slow, and some in the organization worried if he could even keep his spot in the lineup. Jones even got hurt on the very day he announced he was going to hang it up at the end of the year. That caused him to start the season on the disabled list.

But remember that home run in Houston in the fifth game of the season, which single-handedly ended the 0-4 start? Remember Jones' home run to win the wild game against Philadelphia in early May, when Atlanta had trailed Roy Halladay and the Phillies 6-0 early in the game?

And I bet you will never forget Thursday night, when Jones hit two home runs on the night the team gave away his bobblehead. It was pretty special.

He's just not supposed to be doing this. Players who are 40 don't hit .315, and players who play third base certainly don't play at this level — at this age. Look at the careers of Wade Boggs, George Brett, Brooks Robinson and Mike Schmidt — regarded, with Jones, as the best third basemen of all time.

Boggs played until he was 41, but he extended his career by also playing first base and being a designated hitter. He was 38 the final year he played regularly at third base. Brett played until he was 40, but he had

SEE SHANKS, 10C

THE GAME CONCLUDES...

Single digits. Pages 8-9C.



DONN RODENROTH/Special to The Telegraph

Georgia quarterback Aaron Murray is entering his third year as the Bulldogs' starting quarterback, but he has just two wins in nine games against ranked foes.

Murray's final hurdle

Georgia's quarterback hasn't been able to lead the Bulldogs to signature victories

Buffalo
at Georgia

12:21 p.m.,
Sept. 1
(WGXA-FOX)



macon.com
ONLINE

Go to
macon.com/
bulldogsblog
for Seth
Emerson's
Georgia blog
and also follow
him at
twitter.com/
sethemerson.

By SETH EMERSON
semerson@macon.com

ATHENS — Aaron Murray was jokingly asked this past week if he had started picking out his outfit for the Heisman Trophy ceremony this December. After all, Robert Griffin III's socks kind of raised the ante. "Maybe a top hat," Murray said, flashing a wide grin. Wisely, the Georgia quarterback got serious. "No, I'm not looking for that at all," he said. "You know offseason awards, end-of-season awards and accolades, that comes with teams that win." And that will prove to be the key to Murray's legacy at Georgia. Statistically, Murray has done just about everything to prove himself in two years



BEAU CABELL/bcabell@macon.com

Georgia quarterback Aaron Murray, left, is still looking for a signature victory to define his collegiate career.

as a starting quarterback. The career and single-season passing marks he has not set yet, he should eventually threaten.

But one statistic is a blot on his résumé. He has led Georgia to wins over just two ranked teams, and those teams were gone from the

rankings the next week. His overall record against ranked teams is 2-7.

"I gotta win the big games," Murray said. "I've gotta step it up and play better when it comes to big-time games. I know that. And that's something I'm looking forward to this year, is taking that next step and taking on those bigger teams. But at the end of the day it's not all me. All 125, or all 70 when we travel, we play as a team. And if we go out there with the right mindset, I don't see many teams beating us this year."

Obviously, a quarterback's win percentage is different than a baseball pitcher or an individual sport. Sometimes there is only so much he can do. So how much is Murray actually at fault for each of

SEE MURRAY, 10C

Dodgers power past the Braves

By CHARLES ODUM
AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA — Hanley Ramirez drove in four runs with two homers, including the first of three straight shots by the Los Angeles Dodgers in the second inning Saturday night during a 6-2 win over the Atlanta Braves.

**Dodgers 6,
Braves 2**

Next: vs.
Dodgers,
1:35 p.m.,
Sunday (Fox
Sports South)



The Braves failed to gain ground in



JOHN AMIS/Associated Press

Ben Sheets gave up three straight home runs Saturday against Los Angeles.

the NL East as the Washington Nationals dropped a 2-0 decision to the New York Mets. Atlanta remains four games back in the division.

Yellow Jackets turn their focus to Hokies

By STAN AWTRY
sports@macon.com

ATLANTA — Georgia Tech officially ended its preseason practices Saturday with a scrimmage that allowed the coaching staff to look at a lot of different players. Now the focus switches from fundamentals to the actual game plan the Yellow Jackets will use for their season opener against Virginia Tech.

"The players are really excited," quarterback Tevin Washington said. "They're excited to be out of camp, and they're excited to start the season off. It's a new season, and we'll approach it one day at a time."

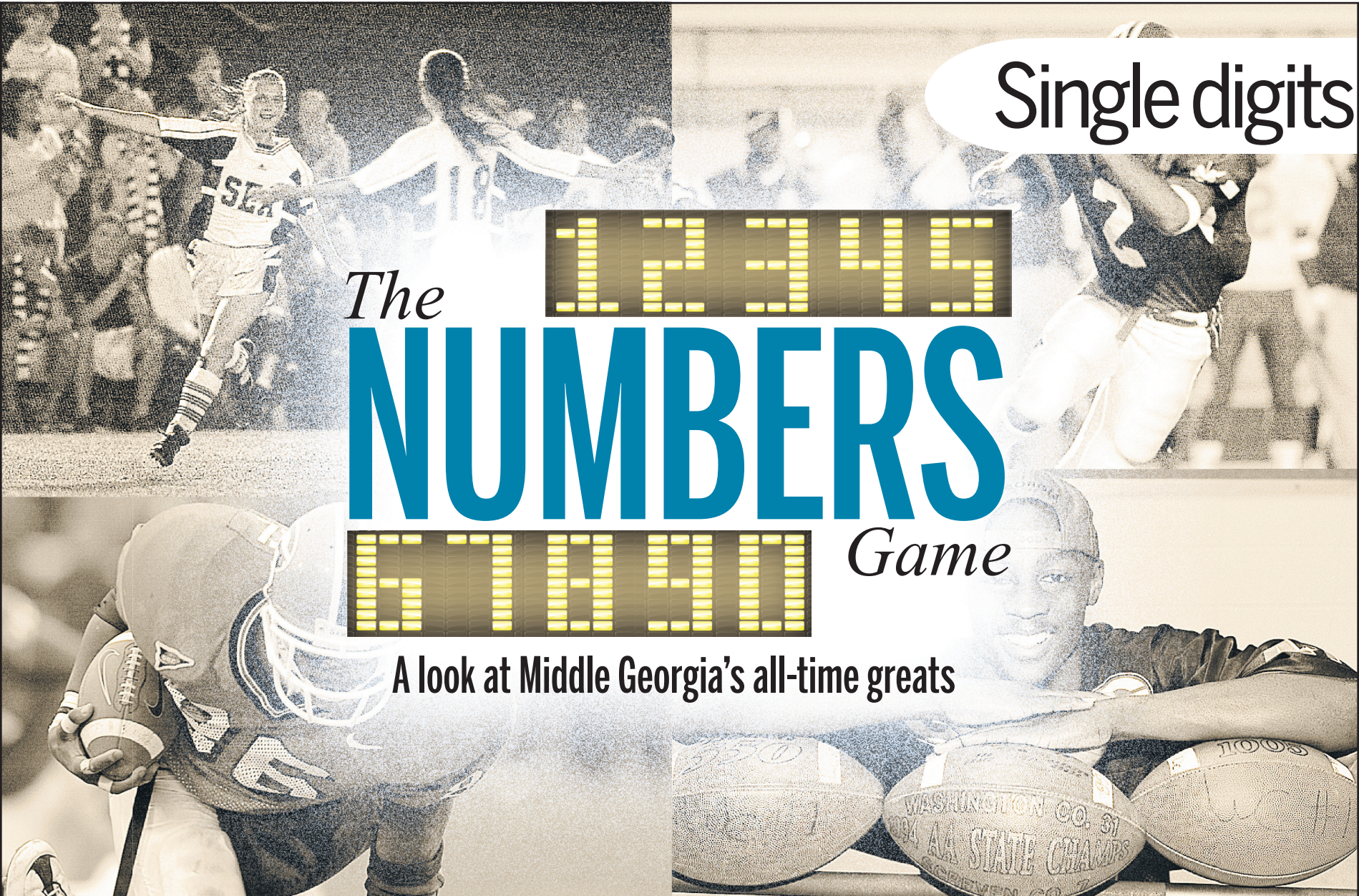
Georgia Tech opens the season Sept. 3 with a nationally televised game in Blacksburg, Va., where the Yellow Jackets last won in 2006. Virginia Tech was ranked No. 16 in the initial Associated Press poll released Saturday. Georgia Tech was sixth among teams that received votes.

**Georgia Tech at
Virginia Tech**

8 p.m., Sept. 3
(ESPN)



SEE JACKETS, 10C



A look at Middle Georgia's all-time greats

Sarah Purvis, Northside, softball

Bio: Purvis was an all-state and All-Middle Georgia selection in 2007 after leading Northside to a region championship. She now plays at Georgia Southern, where she is coming off an outstanding sophomore season. Among Eagles starters, Purvis led the team in most statistical categories. She won 23 games with a 1.62 ERA and had 253 strikeouts. Purvis led her team to the Southern Conference regular-season and tournament championships. She was named the Southern Conference

Pitcher of the Year, as well as making the All-Southern Conference tournament team. She broke program records for single-season strikeouts and wins.

Why we picked her: Purvis' high school dominance was evident in a pair of 15-inning games against Lowndes, when she struck 22 in the first game and 33 in the second game. She's also one of the few to wear No. 0.

Bobby Hendley, Lanier, baseball

Bio: Hendley went 16-4 with 204 strikeouts in two seasons at Lanier. He tossed three no-hitters and was the MVP of the state all-star game. Hendley signed with Georgia but decided to sign a pro contract with the Milwaukee Braves. Hendley played for the Braves, San Francisco Giants, Chicago Cubs and New York Mets. He won a career-best 11 games in 1962 to go with a 3.60 ERA while starting 29 games. Hendley is most known for his duel with Sandy Koufax in 1965. Dubbed the greatest game ever pitched, Koufax threw a no-hitter, but Hendley only allowed one hit himself in opposition. He had a career 3.97 ERA in seven big league seasons. The Stratford baseball field is named after Hendley, and he was inducted into the Macon Sports Hall of Fame. He coached at River North and Tattnall Square and for 16 years at Stratford.

Why we picked him: Hendley's memorable game against Koufax is still talked about today in Macon, 47 years after it happened. Hendley was also a very good basketball player, and he would have played the sport at Georgia if he didn't sign with the Braves.

Others to consider

- Milt Cuyler, Southwest, baseball/football:** Cuyler was named The Telegraph's Selby Buck Award winner as Middle Georgia's top athlete in 1986. He hit .631 with 10 home runs and 44 RBI with 20 stolen bases as a senior baseball player. He also intercepted six passes as a senior in football. The Detroit Tigers selected Cuyler in the second round of the 1986 draft. He made his big league debut in 1990, stealing 47 bases and finishing third in AL Rookie of the Year voting. Cuyler played six seasons for the Tigers before spending time with the Boston Red Sox and Texas Rangers. Cuyler coaches in the Minnesota Twins system.
- Alfonzo Dennard, Wilcox County, football:** Dennard helped lead the Patriots to the state championship game in 2007. Dennard was a second-team All-Big 12 pick in 2010 and a first-team All-Big Ten selection in 2011 while at Nebraska. Dennard is about to start his rookie season with the New England Patriots.
- Robert Edwards, Washington County, football:** Edwards was there for the birthplace of the modern Washington County program that went on to win three state titles. Edwards was an all-state pick in 1992, when the Golden Hawks lost in the state title game. Edwards battled injuries throughout his career, but he did rush for 908 yards and 12 touchdowns as a senior in 1997. Edwards was a first-round pick by the New England Patriots in 1998, and he rushed for 1,115 yards as a rookie. He nearly lost his leg following a catastrophic knee injury in a beach football game following the season and didn't return to the NFL until 2002. Edwards rushed for 3,022 yards and 25 touchdowns in a three-year CFL career. Edwards currently is the head coach at Greene County.
- Donald Patterson, Jones County, football:** Patterson started two seasons (1977 and 1978) at cornerback for Georgia Tech. Patterson played in the NFL for the Detroit Lions and the New York Giants.
- Marteze Waller, Putnam County, football:** Waller was The Telegraph's All-Middle Georgia Player of the Year

West Laurens product Demaryius Thomas had a standout career at Georgia Tech before joining the NFL's Denver Broncos.

in 2011 after rushing for 2,000 yards for the second straight year. He finished his career with 6,260 rushing yards, behind only Darius Marshall and Travis Evans on Middle Georgia's all-time rushing list. Waller has signed with Fresno State.

Rico Washington, Jones County, baseball: The Pittsburgh Pirates selected Washington in the 10th round of the 1997 draft. He spent 11 years in the minor leagues, hitting better than .300 five times. He finally got his only promotion to the majors when the St. Louis Cardinals called him up for 14 games in 2008.

Willie Reid, Warner Robins, football

Bio: Reid was the AP Class AAAA Player of the Year in 1999 after capping an outstanding high school career. He rushed for 1,864 yards as a senior a year after rushing for more than 2,000 yards. He finished his high school career with 5,346 yards — breaking James Brooks' program record — and 65 touchdowns. Reid played in 45 games at Florida State. He finished the 2004 season with 522 punt return yards, breaking Deion Sanders' school record. Reid led the Seminoles with 1,325 all-purpose yards in 2005 and eventually earned MVP honors in the first ACC championship game. He was named MVP of the Orange Bowl after returning a punt for a touchdown against Penn State. The Pittsburgh Steelers selected Reid in the third round of the 2006 NFL draft. Reid also spent time with the Philadelphia Eagles and Dallas Cowboys.

Why we picked him: It took a special player to break a record Brooks set, and Reid was just that kind of player. Few players in Middle Georgia history can match Reid's athleticism, versatility and electricity on a football field.

Others to consider

- Thomas Barnes, Dublin, football:** Barnes made two



JOSH D. WEISS/Special to The Telegraph

all-state teams, including being named Class AA Defensive Player of the Year during Dublin's state title run in 2006. He signed with N.C. State.

Danny Madison, Westside, football: Madison was the AP Class AAAA Offensive Player of the Year in 2008, marking his second straight year on an all-state team.

Chris Slaughter, Peach County, basketball/football: Slaughter had one of the great high school careers in Georgia history. His 3,395 career yards are fifth best in state history, and he broke the single-season state record with 23 during Peach County's state title run in 2005. He played at Auburn and then Fort Valley State.

Erik Walden, Dublin, football: Walden made the all-state team in 2002 before moving on to Middle Tennessee State. Walden holds the school record for single-season and career sacks, and he was a two-time All-Sun Belt Conference selection. After bouncing around to different teams, Walden made his biggest impact with the Green Bay Packers in 2010. He was NFC Defensive Player of the Week after a three-sack performance and played on the Packers' Super Bowl championship team in February 2011.

Terrence Edwards, Washington County, football

Bio: Edwards finished his high school career with two all-state appearances, including recognition as the AP Class AA Player of the Year in 1997. The Golden Hawks finished those two seasons 30-0. Edwards had a standout career at Georgia between 1999 and 2002. As a team captain during the Bulldogs' 2002 SEC championship season, Edwards caught 59 passes for 1,004 yards and 11 touchdowns. Edwards caught 204 passes for 3,093 yards and 30 touchdowns in his career. The yardage total is a SEC record, and his receptions total is second-best in conference history. Edwards spent some time with the Atlanta Falcons, but he has carved out an impressive career in the CFL. He has made two CFL all-star teams during his career, with 421 catches for 6,438 yards and 43 touchdowns. He has 2,895 yards and 21 touchdowns since the beginning of the 2010 season while playing for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers.

Why we picked him: As good as he was in high school and in college, Edwards has been even better in the CFL. Like former Mount de Sales and Georgia star Ben Zambiasi, Edwards has found second life north of the border, and he has excelled. Edwards also stands as one of the great receivers in SEC history.

Others to consider

- Darqueze Dennard, Twiggs County, football:** Dennard made

two all-state teams in high school as a defensive back and as a receiver. He led Middle Georgia with 61 catches, 923 yards and 17 touchdowns as a junior in 2008. Dennard was a full-time starter at defensive back in 2011 at Michigan State, intercepting three passes. He intercepted two passes against Georgia in the Outback Bowl, capping an outstanding two-game stretch that began in the Big Ten championship game.

Tony Gilbert, Central, football: After making an all-state team at Central, Gilbert became the only player to lead Georgia in tackles three different years since defensive records started being kept in 1976. Gilbert had 328 career tackles. He captained the 2002 SEC championship team that finished 13-1. He was a second-team All-SEC pick and was also selected to the SEC academic honor roll. Gilbert played eight seasons in the NFL after Jacksonville drafted him in 2003. Gilbert has worked as an assistant strength and conditioning coach at Georgia and Auburn.

Casey Hayward, Perry, football: Hayward made the all-state team as a defensive back in 2007, but his play at quarterback was a big reason for the Panthers' appearance in the state quarterfinals. Hayward had an outstanding college career at Vanderbilt, intercepting a program record 15 passes in his career. The Walter Camp Foundation and Yahoo! Sports named as a second-team All-America selection. The Green Bay Packers selected Hayward in the second round of the 2012 NFL draft.

Fran Johnson, FPD, softball/track: Johnson cleaned up by winning state championships in basketball, softball and track and field in high school. She was The Telegraph's Selby Buck Award winner as the top athlete in Middle Georgia in 2011. She plays softball at Valdosta State.

Josh Loosier, Tattnall Square, baseball/football: Loosier was a standout in football, basketball and baseball, leading the Trojans to championships in multiple sports.

Richard Reid, Lanier, basketball: Reid had an all-state career at Lanier before becoming one of Mercer's all-time leading scorers. He was a long-time basketball coach at Jones County, Stratford and Tattnall Square.

Odell Thurman, Monticello, football: The all-state and All-Middle Georgia selection was an All-SEC player at Georgia. The Cincinnati Bengals selected Thurman in the second round of the 2005 NFL draft.

Demaryius Thomas, West Laurens, basketball/football

Bio: Thomas starred on both the basketball

NUMBERS FROM 8C

and football teams in high school before signing with Georgia Tech. He eventually replaced Biletnikoff winner Calvin Johnson as the Yellow Jackets' go-to receiver. Despite playing in an option offense, Thomas caught 46 passes for 1,154 yards and eight touchdowns as a junior in 2009. He finished his career with 120 catches for 2,339 yards and 14 touchdowns. The Denver Broncos selected Thomas in the first round of the 2010 NFL draft. Thomas has caught six NFL touchdown passes, but none were bigger than the 80-yard touchdown he caught from Tim Tebow in overtime to upset the Pittsburgh Steelers in the 2012 playoffs. Thomas caught four passes for 204 yards in his playoff debut. He broke the NFL playoff records for average yards per catch in a game and longest overtime touchdown.

Why we picked him: Thomas helped lead West Laurens to a state basketball title in 2004, and he then had more than 1,000 receiving yards as a senior in 2005. Thomas more than adequately filled the shoes of the greatest receiver in Georgia Tech history — Johnson — and Thomas' pro career could be on the precipice of exploding in 2012 while teaming with new Broncos quarterback Peyton Manning.

Others to consider
Lewis Clinch, Crisp County, basketball: Clinch was one of the top 50 recruits in the nation coming out of high school. Clinch earned three letters at Georgia Tech from 2006-2008. He became the 38th player in Georgia Tech history to surpass 1,000 career points. He finished ninth on Georgia Tech's career 3-point field goals made list. He finished his career by scoring 20 or more points in six of his final seven games, averaging 25.1 points during the run.

Kal Daniels, Northside, baseball: Daniels was drafted twice in 1982, and he signed with the Cincinnati Reds after being drafted seventh overall in the June secondary draft. Daniels made his debut with the Reds in 1986, but he had his first full season (and perhaps best season) a year later. Daniels hit .334 with 26 home runs with 64 RBI and 26 stolen bases in 1987. He also had a memorable year in 1990 with the Los Angeles Dodgers when he hit .296 with 27 home runs and 94 RBI.

Travis Evans, Westside, football: Evans led Westside to two trips to the state semifinals — making Westside the only Bibb County team to get that far in the playoffs since 1975. He rushed for 6,279 yards and 74 touchdowns in his career. Only Herschel Walker scored more career touchdowns than Evans among Middle Georgia players.

Gerald Fitch, Westside, basketball: Fitch was The Telegraph Player of the Year in 2000 after leading Westside to the Final Four. No Bibb County team has made it that far since. Fitch started much of his career at Kentucky, making the All-SEC freshman team in 2001 and the All-SEC first team in 2004. He averaged 16 points as a senior in 2003-04 and 10.9 points for his career. Fitch had a short stint with the Miami Heat in 2005-06, but he has spent most of his pro career overseas, playing the 2011-12 season in Spain.

Tommy Mixon, Lanier, basketball: Mixon led Lanier to state championships as a player in 1950 and 1951. Mixon scored a game-high 22 points in the 1951 state title game. He went on to a standout career at Mercer, scoring 1,801 career points. He was a captain of both the Mercer basketball and baseball teams in 1955. Mixon played professionally in baseball and basketball. He later became an esteemed baseball scout. Mixon was inducted into the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame in 1993.

Sarah Ray, Rutland, softball: Ray was The Telegraph's softball player of the year in 2007 after leading the Hurricanes to the state quarterfinals. Ray holds the career strikeout and wins fast-pitch records for Bibb County public schools.

Jeremy Wiggins, Northeast, football: Wiggins made all-state teams in 2001 and 2002 before heading off to play at Appalachian State.

Randy McMichael, Peach County, football

Bio: McMichael started to hit his stride during

his time at Georgia as a tight end after playing some offensive line in high school. McMichael started 21 games at Georgia, finishing with 90 catches for 1,213 yards and five touchdowns. He was an All-SEC selection in 2001.The Miami Dolphins selected McMichael in the fourth round of the 2002 NFL draft. He started every game as a rookie, catching four touchdown passes. He has started 139 of the 147 games he has played in during his 10-year NFL career. He has 417 career catches for 4,488 yards and 24 touchdowns. He is ninth among active tight ends in career receptions. He currently plays for the San Diego Chargers.

Why we picked him: McMichael has gotten better at every level, eventually becoming one of the top tight ends in the NFL.

Others to consider
Nick Brooks, Northside, football: Brooks landed on the all-state first team in 2001 after helping lead the Eagles to the state title game. Brooks earned two letters at Florida, including during the Gators' 2005 national championship season.

Tijuan Green, Northside, football: Green made two all-state teams after bursting on to the scene in the 2006 state playoffs. Green was the 2007 Class AAAA Offensive Player of the Year. He helped lead the Eagles to back-to-back state titles. A running back, Green threw the winning touchdown pass against Ware County in the 2007 championship game.

Tony Hollings, Twiggs County, football: Hollings made two all-state times (1998, 1999) as an athletic quarterback at Twiggs County. He won The Telegraph All-Middle Georgia Player of the Year honors in 1999. Hollings had a brief but electric college career at Georgia Tech. As a junior, he led the nation in rushing (158.3 yards per game) through four games of the 2002 season before suffering an ACL tear. He still finished fifth in the ACC in rushing yardage and third with 11 touchdowns despite playing four games. He previously played in the secondary at Georgia Tech. The Houston Texans selected Hollings in the second round of the 2003 NFL supplemental draft.

Tommy Joyce, FPD, baseball: Joyce holds the school record for single-season home runs with 16. He signed with South Carolina and was drafted by the Baltimore Orioles in 2000.

Jeremy Marshall, Hawkinsville, football: Marshall is one of the only three-time all-state picks in Middle Georgia history. Marshall holds the Hawkinsville single-season and career rushing records: 2,295 yards (2003) and 5,842 yards. Marshall played college football at Wofford.

DeAndre Smelter, Tattnall Square, baseball/ basketball/football

Bio: Smelter made all-state and All-Middle Georgia teams in baseball, football and basketball, and he wore different numbers in each, but we picked his football No. 6. He was The Telegraph's GISA Player of the Year in all three sports, earning the distinction twice in both basketball and baseball. He won the Telegraph's Selby Buck Award as the top athlete in Middle Georgia in both 2008 and 2010, making him the only person to ever win the award twice. Smelter won state championships in baseball and football and led the team to two Final Fours in basketball. He hit the game-winning home run in the 2009 championship baseball series and closed out the game with a save. He scored three touchdowns in Tattnall's 2007 state championship victory, and he made a tip-in at the buzzer to send the Trojans to the 2010 state basketball championship game. He was drafted by the Minnesota Twins but decided to play college baseball at Georgia Tech, spurning multiple offers from major college football programs, including from LSU and Georgia Tech.

Why we picked him: Smelter might be the best overall athlete to ever play in the GISA. He was an all-state player in three sports, and he could have played any of the three in college. Few can make that claim.

Others to consider
Kevis Burnam, Macon County, football: Burnam was an all-state pick as a senior after making 150 tackles and seven sacks. A region defensive player of the year, Burnam went on to play at Auburn.

Todd Coley, Hawkinsville, football: The two-time all-

Complete Numbers Game list

- 0 – Sarah Purvis, Northside, softball
- 1 – Bobby Hendley, Lanier, baseball
- 2 – Willie Reid, Warner Robins, football
- 3 – Terrence Edwards, Washington County, football
- 4 – Demaryius Thomas, West Laurens, basketball/football
- 5 – Randy McMichael, Peach County, football
- 6 – DeAndre Smelter, Tattnall Square, baseball/basketball/football
- 7 – Kate Appleton, Stratford, soccer
- 8 – Jim Nolan, Lanier, basketball
- 9 – Rashard Smith, Dublin, basketball/football
- 10 – Bobby Bryant, Willingham, baseball/basketball/football
- 11 – Mike Jolly, Central, football
- 12 – Billy Henderson, Lanier, baseball/football
- 13 – Blue Moon Odom, Ballard-Hudson, baseball
- 14 – Rondell White, Jones County, baseball
- 15 – Jacquez Green, Peach County, football
- 16 – Cam Bonifay, Mark Smith, baseball/basketball/football
- 17 – Mallon Faircloth, Crisp County, football
- 18 – Mark Johnson, Warner Robins, baseball
- 19 – Louis Ivory, Peach County, football
- 20 – Eddie Anderson, Warner Robins, football
- 21 – James Brooks, Warner Robins, football
- 22 – Brent Cunningham, Putnam County, football
- 23 – Brenda Cliette, Northeast, basketball/track
- 24 – J.T. Thomas, Lanier, football
- 25 – Isaac Jackson, Lanier, football
- 26 – Clint Kent, Westside, football
- 27 – Kevin Brown, Wilkinson County, baseball
- 28 – Lauren Hargrove, Fitzgerald, football
- 29 – Ben Smith, Warner Robins, football
- 30 – Tree Rollins, Crisp County, basketball
- 31 – Lee Martin, Perry, basketball
- 32 – Kenny Walker, Crawford County, basketball
- 33 – Ben Zambiasi, Mount de Sales, football
- 34 – Sharone Wright, Southwest, basketball
- 35 – Bunny Fuller, Taylor County, basketball
- 36 – Russell Branyan, Stratford, baseball
- 37 – Shannon Hall, Central, football
- 38 – Billy Kitchens, Lanier, football
- 39 – K.J. Morton, Northside, football
- 40 – Julian Burnett, Westside, football
- 41 – John Mathews, Crawford County, basketball
- 42 – Charles Johnson, Hawkinsville, football
- 43 – Herschel Walker, Johnson County, football
- 44 – Alvin Toles, Mary Persons, football
- 45 – Melvin Borum, Hawkinsville, football
- 46 – Jaquain Feazell, Peach County, football
- 47 – Mel Blount, Lyons Industrial, football
- 48 – Leroy Hill, Baldwin, football
- 49 – Michael Lemon, Stratford, football
- 50 – Tank Lawrence, Lanier, football
- 51 – Travis Jones, Wilkinson County, football
- 52 – Terry Fair, Southwest, basketball
- 53 – David Taylor, Central, football
- 54 – Horace Grant, Hancock Central, basketball
- 55 – Kammeon Holsey, Hancock Central, basketball
- 56 – Josh Weldon, Crisp County, football
- 57 – Torrey Howard, Northside, football
- 58 – Kenny Parker, Northside, football
- 59 – Willie McGaughey, Lanier, football
- 60 – Steve Wilson, Southwest, football
- 61 – Danny Carpenter, Northside, football
- 62 – Jim Parker, Ballard-Hudson, football
- 63 – Neil Callaway, Central, football
- 64 – Roger Womack, Tift County, football
- 65 – Justin Brown, Warner Robins, football
- 66 – LeKevin Smith, Stratford, football
- 67 – Carl Summers, Willingham, football
- 68 – Gerald Payton, Central, football
- 69 – Terry Jolly, Peach County, football
- 70 – Wayne Johnson, Willingham, football
- 71 – George Collins, Warner Robins, football
- 72 – Julius Adams, Ballard-Hudson, football
- 73 – Craig Hertwig, Mark Smith, football
- 74 – Mike Washington, Baldwin, football
- 75 – Maurice Hurt, Baldwin, football
- 76 – Al Lucas, Northeast, football
- 77 – Bill Spivey, Warner Robins, basketball
- 78 – Antwoin Daniels, Mary Persons, football
- 79 – Trevor Jenkins, Stratford, football
- 80 – Craig Ogletree, Lamar County, football
- 81 – Takeo Spikes, Washington County, football
- 82 – Larry Tharpe, Southwest, football
- 83 – Mack Guest, Central, football
- 84 – Greg Montgomery, Southwest, football
- 85 – Peppi Zellner, Mary Persons, basketball/football
- 86 – Nick Eason, Toombs County, football
- 87 – Rod Whipple, Wilkinson County, basketball/football
- 88 – Marcus Robinson, Peach County, football
- 89 – Benji Roland, Dodge County, football
- 90 – Devarick Scandrett, Mary Persons, football
- 91 – Ron Simmons, Warner Robins, football
- 92 – Anthony Abrams, Warner Robins, football
- 93 – Justin Kitchens, Houston County, football
- 94 – Josh Chester, Northside, football
- 95 – Adrian Hollingshed, Peach County, football
- 96 – Kyle Moore, Houston County, football
- 97 – Abry Jones, Northside, football
- 98 – Greg Clark, Northside, football
- 99 – Will Thompson, Northside, football

state selection quarterbacked Hawkinsville to state championships in 2003 and 2004. Coley was named Class A Offensive Player of the Year in 2004.

Zeke Rozier, Bleckley County, football: Rozier rushed for nearly 2,000 yards to lead Bleckley County to an appearance in the state quarterfinals in 2006. He played college football at Georgia Southern.

Kate Appleton, Stratford, soccer

Bio: Appleton made five all-state teams and won five state championships — eighth-graders are eligible to play varsity sports in the GISA — at Stratford. Appleton was Stratford's captain her final two high school seasons in 2001 and 2002. She holds the single-season and career records for goals and points and the career record for assists. She had four seasons of more than 25 goals, including 46 goals in 1998 and 51

in 1999. Appleton was a three-time Telegraph Player of the Year and is the only person to earn three player of the year distinctions for a team sport. She earned two letters at Georgia, making the SEC academic honor roll twice.

Why we picked her: Not only does she hold all of Stratford's career records, but Appleton holds them by a wide margin. She scored 187 goals (84 more than second place on the list) and scored 468 points (224 more than second). Her 94 assists are 42 more than second place. Four times Stratford players scored more than 100 points in a season, with Appleton having two of those occurrences.

Others to consider
Kate Baker, Monroe Academy, soccer: Baker was named The Telegraph's All-Middle Georgia soccer player of the year as a senior after leading the Mustangs to a GISA Class AA championship game upset of Frederica. She played college soccer at Presbyterian.

Antonio Henton, Peach County, football: Henton is the last

Middle Georgian to be named All-Classification Player of the Year, an honor he earned after leading the Trojans to their first state football title in 2005. Henton played at Ohio State and Georgia Southern, and he now plays for Fort Valley State.

John Thomas, Baldwin, football: The former All-Middle Georgia Player of the Year rushed for 1,003 yards and 10 touchdowns and passed for 1,298 yards and 12 touchdowns as a senior in 1983. He played college football at Georgia.

Jim Nolan, Lanier, basketball

Bio: Nolan earned the title of Lanier's best athlete twice during World War II. He went on to play at Georgia Tech, where he earned three letters. He made the first-team All-SEC tournament team in 1948. Nolan captained the 1949 Georgia Tech team. The Philadelphia Warriors selected Nolan with the 18th overall pick in the 1949 NBA draft. Nolan was inducted into both the Georgia Tech Sports Hall of Fame and the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame in 1962.

Why we picked him: Nolan is arguably the first great basketball player in Macon history. Lanier had success prior to Nolan, but no player had the impact Nolan could have on the game.

Others to consider
Leonard Goolsby, Northside, football: Northside has had plenty of standout running backs, but none have rushed for more in their career than Goolsby, who was an all-state selection in 1998.

Rashard Smith, Dublin, basketball/football

Bio: Smith won the Selby Buck Award at Middle Georgia's best athlete in 2009 after leading the Irish to their second state basketball title in four years. Smith's versatility on the gridiron helped him make two all-state teams. He was the AP Defensive Player of the Year and the GACA Offensive Player of the Year in 2007. He followed that up by being named AP Defensive Player of the Year again in 2008. Smith intercepted 10 passes in both his junior and senior seasons. Smith went on to a college football career at N.C. State, where he became the first Wolfpack player to play on both sides of the ball in the same game in six years.

Why we picked him: Smith is believed to be the only player in Middle Georgia history to be named AP Defensive Player of the Year twice. While intercepting 10 passes as a junior, he managed to compile 2,000 yards of offense at quarterback.

Others to consider
Wilber Cromer, Douglass-Montezuma, football: Douglass went 2-7-1 and 0-10 in the seasons sandwiched around when Cromer helped it win the state title in 1981. He was Telegraph Player of the Year after rushing for 1,200 yards.

Ashley Kirk, Stratford, soccer: Kirk missed time in high school with a knee injury, but she made up for it at South Carolina. Kirk was named SEC Freshman of the Year in 2004. She became South Carolina's first four-time All-SEC player. She finished her career as the school's all-time leader in matches started with 81 and in game-winning assists with six. Kirk was also a two-time SEC all-tournament selection. She has played professionally overseas.

Mike Richardson, Warner Robins, football: Richardson battled injuries as a senior in high school, but he still earned a scholarship to Notre Dame. He started 30 games for the Fighting Irish, intercepting four passes as a senior in 2006. The New England Patriots drafted Richardson in the sixth round of the 2007 NFL draft. He spent some time with the Kansas City Chiefs and Indianapolis Colts.

Nathan Smith, Tattnall Square, football: Smith rushed for a then-school record 1,826 yards and 27 touchdowns in 1999.

Doug Stanley, R.E. Lee, football: Stanley was named state offensive player of the year in 1988 after leading R.E. Lee to the state title. He rushed for 754 yards and 11 touchdowns, and he passed for 666 yards and 10 touchdowns with no interceptions.